

THE TIMES

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TODAY

SIR ALEC ON HOW TO GET LUCKY
Valerie Grove meets an actor still winning work at 82, PAGE 17



ECONOMIC VIEW

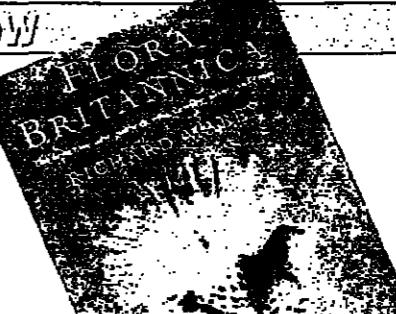


Anatole Kaletsky on the IMF's farewell to Friedman, PAGE 27

LYNNE TRUSS BACK KICKING AND SCREAMING

The start of a new weekly column PAGE 42

TOMORROW



Tanks sent into the West Bank: Arabs plan confrontation in Jerusalem

Israel on brink of war as 50 die in 'new intifada'

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL and the Palestinians were close to all-out war last night after Israel declared a state of emergency in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The death toll in two days of fighting had exceeded 50.

Israeli tanks were sent into the area for the first time since it was captured from the Arabs in the 1967 Six Day War.

Western diplomatic sources said that the Middle East was closer to a wider Arab-Israeli war than for many years. Syria, Egypt and Jordan are all bitterly opposed to the Likud Government's policy on Muslim holy places in Arab east Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is likely to become a flashpoint again today as Palestinians attempt to converge on the Temple Mount for Friday prayers and force the closure of a tunnel they claim is threatening Al-Aqsa mosque, the third-holiest Islamic shrine. It was the opening of a second exit from the 100-year-old tunnel this week that triggered the latest violence. Extra security forces are being drafted into the city.

The Palestinians received encouragement yesterday from the 22-member Arab League which spoke for the first time in three years of an "intifada".

Binjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, cut short a European visit to chair emergency talks with security chiefs. A spokesman for Mr Netanyahu ruled out any closure of the new tunnel exit. The Prime Minister is pressing hard for a meeting with Yasir Arafat, president of the Palestinian Authority, to whom he has spoken by phone.

Palestinian leaders, who claimed that towns evacuated under the 1993 peace agreement were being re-

Clinton calls for return to talks

President Clinton last night called on both sides to return to the negotiating table and resume the peace process. The US, which was caught totally unaware by completion of the Jerusalem tunnel, is considering sending an envoy to the Middle East.

The loss of life over the past few days "points to the urgency for both sides to take positive steps to resolve the issues that divide them," Mr Clinton said.

The Foreign Office, in an unusually blunt criticism of Israel, said "actions such as the opening of the tunnel ... have caused suspicion and disquiet". It urged leaders on both sides to do all in their power to cool the situation.

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occupied by Israeli forces, declared that only closure of the exit could halt the bloodshed.

Palestinians said in addition to talks about stopping the fighting, Mr Arafat was seeking guarantees about implementation of the peace deal negotiated by the previous Labour Government. Arab diplomats said there was a possibility of a meeting in Cairo at the weekend.

The Erez checkpoint between Gaza and Israel, where the only previous meeting between the two leaders took place, was transformed into a battlefield. Israeli troops there came under heavy automatic fire as

they used a lorry to rescue an Israeli TV cameraman critically wounded in crossfire.

In the Palestinian town of Nablus, Palestinian police stormed Joseph's Tomb, a Jewish seminary, after a fierce gun battle with Israeli troops. Two Israeli soldiers were killed before a tank evacuated the remaining soldiers. Palestinians then sacked part of the seminary.

According to Palestinian witnesses, some of the Palestinian forces protected the trapped soldiers. General Uzi Dayan of the Israeli Army said a "real battle" took place around the tomb.

In many cases Palestinian police opened fire after they saw demonstrators killed and wounded by Israeli fire. "We are defending our hearts. Jerusalem is our heart," one Palestinian officer said as he joined a gun battle in Gaza.

By nightfall at least 39 Palestinians and 11 Israelis had been killed. "It is a picture of war," said Israel Army radio as the fighting spread from the Gaza Strip, where thousands of Palestinians stormed Jewish settlements, to the West Bank.

Many of the Palestinians seemed to almost revel in the idea of "martyrdom" as they attacked heavily-armed Israelis with stones and bottles. The mobs in Gaza, marching on the isolated Jewish outpost of Netzarim as women settlers and their children cowered in bomb shelters, chanted: "The army of Muhammad is back." They attacked with firebombs, bottles and stones.

One settler, Michael Steinbaum, told Israel radio by mobile telephone: "The women and children are in the shelter here praying and the men are outside fighting. There



A Palestinian policeman firing his automatic rifle at Israeli troops. A shell case is being ejected

Palestinian snipers on rooftops aiming at us."

At Kfar Dorom, another outpost attacked by Palestinians, onlookers saw a boy aged about 13 pick up a rifle from an injured Palestinian policeman and continue firing.

Israel radio said that the settlement of Nissanim in the northern

Gaza Strip was briefly evacuated, but male settlers later returned.

Many of the sites of the worst fighting were biblical, indicating the religious factor that has re-entered the conflict. Israeli commentators yesterday blamed Yehud Olmer, the right-wing Mayor of Jerusalem, for pressuring Mr Netanyahu to go

ahead with opening the tunnel exit.

Shimon Peres, the former Labour Prime Minister, also blamed the Government but dismissed as "speculation and gossip" reports that he was laying the groundwork for an attempt to form a national unity government in an attempt to salvage peace talks.

Gas users get final warning before their bill

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of people are getting final warnings from British Gas that they will be disconnected even though they have not received a bill.

Red notices threatening disconnection are being sent to good payers around the country as a new billing system has thrown the company into a fresh round of chaos and controversy.

British Gas, whose full national billing system has been operating for just a few weeks, has blamed the Government's demands for it to open up the gas market to competition for it having to rush through a nationwide billing operation.

Computer glitches in the £150 million system are sending out reminders, which warn of cutting off supplies, often before a bill is sent out. Hundreds of customers are also querying the amounts of the bills they do receive.

In East Anglia and eastern England 12,000 customers have received reminders without a bill while in South Yorkshire, London and the Southeast, batches of several hundred customers have been similarly affected. The Gas Consumers Council has received complaints about wrong reminders at six of its 11 offices in the past two months.

Customers' anger and fear over the disconnection has been sharpened because of severe difficulties in getting through to British Gas on the telephone. Its phone service is failing to meet the huge demand generated by customers' complaints with many getting a constant engaged tone or answerphone.

British Gas said: "The magnitude of the billing system means we have had some teething problems. We understand that this is causing difficulties and that people

Confirmed on page 2, col 5

Farmers reap record profits

Farmers in England have just had their most profitable year, thanks to high produce prices, world shortages and EU aid payments. Average net farm income increased by 29 per cent to a record £363 a hectare.

But this year plummeting wheat and potato prices and a slump in beef sales will hit profits Page 23

Duchess to fight in court

THE Duchess of York has decided to take her battle to block a book about her private life into open court, her solicitors announced yesterday.

The decision came a day after she learnt, after a High Court ruling, that such a hearing would mean the prospect of public questioning about her former relationships.

She must also find £500,000 as security for any damages that might be won by her former friend, Dr Allan Starkie, and publishers Michael O'Mara Books Ltd, if the 10-day court hearing, starting on October 7, goes against her.

Friends said yesterday that she was determined to fight on. Jeffrey Schneider, her American spokesman, was asked if that meant she was prepared to go into the witness box and face questions about her private life. He said: "The decision speaks for itself."

Geldof in fight over children after raid on ex-wife's home

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL AND STEWART TENDLER

BOB GELDOF, the former pop singer and entrepreneur, last night launched an emergency High Court action in the Family Division following a police raid on the home of his former wife, Paula Yates, in which opium was allegedly found.

The couple's three children currently live with their mother and her new lover, the singer Michael Hutchence.

The Live Aid campaigner appeared for 30 minutes before a judge in chambers at 6pm over the future of the children. As he left court, he refused to comment. "You know I don't talk about this sort of thing boys," he said.

Miss Yates, who was in Australia with Hutchence, was represented at the hearing. In a statement they expressed "complete surprise" that drugs had allegedly been found in their Chelsea home following a tip-off.

Scotland Yard said police were examining substances removed on Wednesday by drugs squad officers from the Yates-Hutchence home in Redburn Street.

Geldof, 41, who is believed to be with his children — Fifi Trixibelle, 13, Peaches, six, and Pixie, four, while their mother is abroad — lives

nearby in the £300,000 house in which Hutchence used to live.

Ms Yates, 34, and Hutchence are with their daughter Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily in Sydney visiting relatives and friends of the INXS singer.

Geldof is no stranger to the High Court. He fought a bitter divorce settlement with Ms Yates after their marriage broke up when she met Hutchence two years ago. In a bizarre settlement, the former Boomtown Rats lead singer vacated the house in Redburn Street to make way for Ms Yates and Hutchence.

It is thought police will await the couple's return before trying to interview them. The couple's nanny is thought to have made a statement.

Last night *The Sun* newspaper confirmed that it was suspending Ms Yates's weekly column pending the outcome of the police inquiry.

TOMORROW

Prescott: my life with Blair

WORKING as number two to Tony Blair can be frustrating and exasperating and sometimes it is a "bumpy ride", according to John Prescott.

Labour's deputy leader occasionally races down the two flights of stairs between their offices at Westminster to "have it out" with Mr Blair if he disagrees with what he is doing or saying.

But they get on well together and Mr Prescott says: "it's good to work for a leader who knows what he wants."

A graphic description of the working relationship between Mr Blair and Mr Prescott appears in *The Times Magazine* tomorrow in interviews with Mr Prescott and other Labour figures.

Mr Prescott says it is his "right" to tell Mr Blair what he thinks of things.



Five apples a day keep the cardiac surgeon away

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

SEVERAL apples a day — or any kind of fruit — will keep the cardiac surgeon away, researchers have found.

Eating fresh fruit every day cuts the risk of dying from a heart attack by almost a quarter and from a stroke by almost one third, a study has shown. Overall, those who ate fruit daily

increased their life expectancy by 20 per cent compared with those who ate fruit less frequently.

The findings of the study of 11,000 people, who were followed for 17 years, add to evidence that regular consumption of fruit helps to prevent cancer. At least five items, such as an apple or orange, a day are recommended. Phytochemicals in the fruit are known to alter almost every stage in the development of cancer but the

mechanism by which it affects heart disease is less well understood.

The results of the study, published in the *British Medical Journal*, were unexpected. Dr Timothy Key and colleagues at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund's epidemiology unit at Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, who started the study in the 1970s, say they had expected to find that heart disease rates were lowest in those who ate a high fibre or vegetarian diet. Although

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Flurry of flutterings escorts the Lib Dems safely on their way

All week at Brighton a late September butterfly, a red admiral, has been trapped within the hangar of a conference hall where Liberal Democracy has gathered for debate.

Sometimes it has fluttered above the heads of the delegates — a collection of good-heeled, free-spirited people such as no other party can boast. It fluttered energetically yesterday at the words "the right to be different — the right not to conform — is the main reason we joined this party", from a lady in Taunton in a

two-piece Marks & Spencer suit.

Sometimes it has fluttered around the lights of bored camera crews: representatives of a media crowd troubled, all of us, by the vague feeling that we ought to be somewhere else. For hours at a stretch, it seems, my eyes and attention have followed the butterfly. Whole swaths of key debates are, for this sketchwriter, memories only of a butterfly's aerial display.

Well into a good speech yesterday by Alan Beith, MP, the party's deputy leader, the

butterfly had me transfixed again. Shockingly, Mr Beith actually used the word "liberalism" — not the liberal-ism of brave moderns such as Tony Blair who gun down ideology with killer hypens — and was cheered.

But it is hard to take the new Beith seriously. He has been got at by the image people. Someone has told him to look relevant. This being British Fashion Week, Mr Beith had discarded his funeral director's suit and tripped in wearing what looked like a Paul Smith design: three-piece

deconstructed Edwardian. His delivery, too, aimed at the upbeat. Gone was his schoolmasterly drone; instead, he would suddenly and intermittently shout out passages of his text. The choice of passage seemed random. "With the Liberal Democrats YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE," he bawled, surprisingly. We felt embarrassed — like when

granny suddenly ran at the dinner table, I stared at my Agenda — Motion F460: Stay Away From Myanmar (Burma), this Conference urges the British people [to avoid Burma] from November 16 to the end of the dry season" — then at the butterfly.

The butterfly was still there for Baroness Williams of Crosby's speech: Shirley Williams

was the conference cigarette, as it were, after Mr Beith's climax. I was musing over a noticeable influx into the hall of a group who looked like thirtysomething gay men when it struck me that they had heard media talk of the arrival of Shirley, and supposed it would be Shirley Bassey.

The redoubtable and indefinably doddery Lady Williams, suited in tailleur, delivered a heartening speech hardly a line of which bore any resemblance to the pre-released text. Perhaps she

picked up the wrong valise at home! In a year's time our political world may have changed out of recognition. A beleaguered Blair and Ashdown may be enmeshed in fruitcake plans for tribalising politics. Squabbling about whether Mr Ashdown can be Education Secretary. A Liberal Democrat conference will then be a different affair. We may look back in disbelief at that anachronistic "have a safe journey home", amazed at our lack of any sense of an era closing.

I found the exit. So, I hope, has the butterfly.

MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

Birt angers staff with apology for Clarke interview

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN BIRT, the Director-General of the BBC, was accused last night of caving in to pressure from the Conservative Party after apologising for shortcomings in an Anna Ford radio interview with Kenneth Clarke.

Senior presenters at the BBC were mortified by the decision of Mr Birt, conveyed yesterday in letter to Brian Mawhinney, the Tory party chairman, to uphold the complaint against Ms Ford. Dr Mawhinney had said that Ms Ford, who had repeatedly interrupted the Chancellor, had been "openly hostile" on Radio 4's *Today* programme.

He claimed that Ms Ford's final comment, in which she said to Mr Clarke "So you are not going to elevate the debate?" was a "disgraceful lapse from impartiality". Yet

moments later Tony Blair had been treated with "kid gloves" by James Naughtie, another Today presenter, Dr Mawhinney claimed.

Ms Ford, who was shown the text of Mr Birt's letter last Friday, has not been reprimanded. The presenter, who has told colleagues the interview was not satisfactory, declined to comment.

The leak of Mr Birt's confidential letter is a significant victory for the Conservatives. It prompted angry protests from Labour at a time when broadcasters are facing increasing pressure in the run-up to the election.

A senior BBC presenter said last night: "We feel let down. I would have hoped there would have been more support from on high." Mr Birt said in his letter: "The Editor of the

programme has already made clear his view that there were more interruptions than were appropriate and, with hindsight, Anna Ford agrees."

Mr Birt denied that her final challenge had been intended as a statement of her personal view, but he admitted: "There is no doubt that the end of the interview was unsatisfactory." He said that the interview with Mr Blair did test the Labour leader.

He concluded: "Despite these shortcomings, my view is that Mr Clarke, robust as ever, was not inhibited from putting over his points to *Today's* audience."

Brian Wilson, Labour's campaign manager, said: "The BBC has openly complained for some time about what it calls undue pressure from political parties. Now, faced with an attack from Brian Mawhinney, it has caved in."

The controversy has caused tension between Mr Naughtie and Ms Ford, who is not noted for aggressive interviewing. "He is furious at being dragged into the complaint. It is better to be accused of being too hard than too soft," said a BBC official.

The BBC denied that Mr Birt's letter constituted an apology. "There is no mention of an apology in this letter, and no direct criticism of Anna Ford," a spokesman said.

Mr Adams was in London

not to offer a new initiative on the peace process, but to publicise his autobiography, *Before The Dawn*. In a sharp dark suit and silk tie, with well-barbered beard and shock of neat black hair, he looked every inch the successful American first-novelist on his European promo tour.

He had planned a press conference within the precincts of the Palace of Westminster with the Labour MPs Jeremy Corbyn and Tony Benn, but after Tony Blair's intervention, he had to make do with the patch of grass across the street. He was late; his heavily-built minders, mobile telephones glued to their ears, paced the grass as they tried to establish his whereabouts. He had, it transpired, been meeting Mr Corbyn.

It was soon time to move on to the main grilling of the day, which had been hastily rescheduled in an Irish social club in Camden Town. A barrage of cameras, mikes and notebooks awaited. The man from Heinemann, Mr Adams's publisher, declared that the autobiography was "a magnificent narrative of events, not a political polemic".

Very well, Mr Adams, why did you include a supposedly fictional account of the killing of a British Army officer? "I thought it important, in trying to achieve a sense of a community under threat, that some members of that community respond to armed action." Was it based on a real event, Mr Adams? No. Have you squeezed a trigger in the manner described in your book, Mr Adams? No.

Who would say were your major literary influences, Mr Adams? Oh, Liam O'Flaherty, Frank O'Connor, Roddy Doyle, Gabriel García Márquez, and P.G. Wodehouse.

Pardon?

What will happen to the royalties you earn? Royalties from my previous books have gone to republican prisoners, but this time they will come to me, and what I do with them is a private matter.

Why don't you sue newspapers which brand you a former member of the IRA, Mr Adams? I can't afford to, but I always send a solicitor's letter.

Angling British media fails to bring Adams to book

By ALAN HAMILTON

TRYING to get a straight answer out of Gerry Adams is like nailing jelly to the ceiling. He is, in other words, a consummate politician.

He spent yesterday in London allowing himself to be baited by the British media, slithering through the muddy waters of the Northern Ireland peace process like a glinting pike but refusing to swallow any hooks. What he said has said many times before, but not often standing in front of Big Ben.

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Corbyn and Benn still face party disciplinary action

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Labour leadership last night refused to rule out disciplinary action against Jeremy Corbyn and Tony Benn, even though their meeting with Gerry Adams at the House of Commons was cancelled.

The two MPs had been threatened on Wednesday with ejection from the parliamentary party if yesterday's meeting with the Sinn Féin president went ahead. Mr Adams pulled out of the meeting early yesterday and instead held private talks with

the MPs at a location away from Westminster.

During media interviews, Mr Adams prompted fresh controversy by saying that he was pleased only one person had been killed during this week's police operation in London. Mr Adams said he had never met Diarmuid O'Neill, the suspected terrorist who was killed, but repeated his call for questions to be answered about the circumstances of his death.

"We are now being told there was no gunfire, that the only shots fired were the shots that killed him," he said. "The spin put out by those who

hated him in two or three days has been found to be the total opposite of what has occurred."

Mr Adams said Mr Corbyn and Mr Benn had been put in an untenable position and accused the Labour leadership of conducting a "McCarthy-style witch-hunt".

Donald Dewar, the Labour Chief Whip, said that good sense had prevailed. Senior Labour sources said that Mr Dewar would wait to see what happened over the next few days before deciding whether action needed to be taken against the two left-wing MPs.

Gas billing confusion

Continued from page 1
cannot always reach us easily." Telecommunications experts were working to resolve the problems.

British Gas has already pumped an extra £6 million into trying to smooth out the system which now units bill reminders were also unable to reach their Gas Consumers Office which had been forced to close through overwork. The bills of several hundred customers in Doncaster had not been issued because the computer had skipped a postcode.

Since April when larger winter bills started to be issued the Gas Consumers Council has received 1,756 complaints about meter reading and billing delays.

British Gas said it sends out 76 million bills a year and that the problems involved a tiny proportion. "The billing difficulties we have are not to do with staffing but with technology and our networks."

was having to close some of its offices periodically to catch up with backlogs.

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Yachtsman dies in gun battle with Albanians

By TIM JONES AND HARVEY ELLIOTT

A BRITISH businessman has been shot dead after trying to fight off Albanian bandits boarding his yacht. Keith Hedley, 57, died in the arms of his companion early yesterday on his motor yacht *Carenia*, which was moored at the Greek island of Corfu. Local sources said Mr Hedley, from Kent, died in a struggle when a fierce shoot-out developed between police and the raiders, who were armed with automatic weapons. The couple and two other friends were thought to have been asleep when they were woken by the Albanians, who had crossed the sea in a speedboat. At their narrowest point, the straits are eight miles.

Mr Hedley is understood to



have confronted the four men as they tried to cut out the yacht's tender. After a brief scuffle, Mr Hedley, his companion and friends are understood to have been restrained by the Albanians as they boarded the yacht and began ransacking it.

As they were being held prisoner, police were called and Mr Hedley, director of a building company, died in the ensuing gun battle. According to one unconfirmed account, he had tried to frighten the Albanians away by shooting at them with his shotgun at the Gouvia Marina, close to Corfu's main harbour. Last night, Kent police said they had been asked by the Foreign Office to inform Mr Hedley's wife of his death.

Boats moored in Corfu have

increasingly become key targets for a growing number of Albanian drug and illegal immigrant smugglers. The comparative wealth of the island has proved a magnet — and a source of intense frustration — to Albanians trying desperately to improve their own standard of living.

Three months ago British tourists in the Club Med resort at Nissaki on the island's northern coast cowered as a group of bandits sprayed bullets into the walls. One of the Albanians was swimming towards two speedboats to unite them when he was spotted by one of an increasing army of security guards who shot into the air to frighten them.

Britons with holiday homes on the island have also been attacked. Lord Rothschild had two power boats stolen from his garden, one of which belonged to Lord Sainsbury.

So far the attacks have not damaged the reputation of Corfu, which is recovering from the effects of too much cheap accommodation, especially in the village of Benitses. Corfu became known as the Majorca of Greece and has some of the most attractive countryside in the Mediterranean. It was particularly popular with wealthy Britons and cricket is still played on the main square. The Duke of Edinburgh was born there.

□ A lifeboat is to be dedicated to two British sailors murdered on a yacht they were crewing in the Caribbean. A ceremony at Bembridge on the Isle of Wight will mark the dedication of the 16 ft inshore craft, to be named *Criday and Tom* in memory of Ian Cridland and Tom Williams.

They and the American passengers on *Computech Challenger*, John and Kathy Clever, were murdered in 1994 when three Antiguans boarded it off the island of Barbuda, intending to carry out a robbery. They shot everyone on board.



Wayne Hemingway's Red Or Dead show, inspired by the mix of London streetlife

Motorcycle stunt-rider emerges from coma

By BILL FROST

EDDIE KIDD, the motorcycle stunt-rider who suffered severe brain damage in an accident last month, has emerged from what his doctors feared might be a ten-year coma.

After a hospital visit yesterday, his family said that Kidd, 37, was expressing emotion by "squeezing the hands of nurses and relatives". The stunt rider was thrown from his machine while trying to leap off over a speeding car at a bikers' rally in Warwickshire on August 11. He lost control after completing the jump and plunged 20ft down an earth bank.

Kidd was initially treated at Warwick Hospital but was moved to the nearby Royal Leamington Spa Rehabilitation Hospital. After seven weeks on a life-support machine he is breathing independently and beginning to recognise and respond to people around him. The hospital said that Kidd was still at an early stage of recovery and could be left with mental or physical impairment.

His agent Bruce Benson said he thought that Kidd's fighting spirit and fitness would help him to make a full recovery. "He will come through this, I strongly believe that, and my prayers and thoughts are with him."

Child sex attacker captured on M6

By RUSSELL JENKINS AND KATE ALDERSON

POLICE recaptured a dangerous child sex attacker yesterday 30 hours after he had escaped from a hospital in Birmingham.

John Mayes, 45, a convicted paedophile, was spotted by a motorist wandering along the hard shoulder of the M6 in Staffordshire and subsequently arrested by a motorway patrol near the Cannock roundabout at junction 11.

A second paedophile, Steve Daggan, 35, convicted of three indecent assaults on young girls but thought to be less of a danger, was still on the run last night from Ashworth Hospital, Maghull, Liverpool, after absconding during a shopping trip on Wednesday.

After Mayes's recapture, the authorities opened an inquiry into how he had been able to evade his male nurse escort and flee from St Margaret's Hospital in Great Barr. MPs expressed their astonishment last night that Mayes, considered by police to be extremely dangerous and violent, was in a hospital for people with severe learning disabilities instead of a secure hospital.

Police earlier mounted guard at the gates of primary schools in Great Barr and Walsall, where he had been spotted shortly after his escape. Some head teachers had kept their children inside their classrooms during the day and others had increased sec-



Mayes: evaded escort

Woman choked girl in quest for attention

By PETER FOSTER

urity. Mothers, picking up their children, spoke of their concern.

Mayes, who has three previous convictions, was convicted at Stafford Crown Court in 1994 of a serious sex attack on a seven-year-old boy. He was ordered to be treated at St Margaret's, where he was held in a locked ward.

He escaped at 9.30am on Wednesday from the hospital grounds while he was being escorted by a male nurse from the recreational facilities to his ward. He had become agitated and difficult to control.

Mohammed Masood, Mayes's consultant psychiatrist, said that discussions would now take place on whether treatment at the hospital was still appropriate or if he should be moved to a more secure establishment.

Exeter Crown Court was told that from the age of 14, Jordan had made a series of attacks on three babies while doing work-experience as a nanny. Over the next four years she made four identical attacks on two other children.

Investigators handling Jordan's case believe she may have been suffering from Münchausen's syndrome by proxy, a variant of Münchausen's syndrome in which sufferers harm themselves to attract attention in cases of Münchausen's by proxy, sufferers harm others.

Yesterday, after an 11-day trial, Jordan, of Chard, Somerset, was acquitted of murder and convicted of manslaughter and two counts of grievous bodily harm. The court was told that before her death, the child had been admitted to hospital twice with unexplained breathing stoppages.

Sentence was deferred pending reports.

Surgery sends Queen Mother reeling

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE success of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's hip operation has enabled her to venture a few steps of that most strenuous activity, Scottish country dancing.

The news was disclosed yesterday by her grandson, the Prince of Wales, during a conversation with councillors in Wick, Caithness. The Prince disclosed that the Queen Mother, who loved dancing, had been able to take part again at an informal ceilidh at Balmoral earlier this week.

She is unlikely to have taken more than a few token steps but the news will offer hope to people who have undergone hip replacement. Last November, at the

age of 95, the Queen Mother became one of the oldest patients in the world to have the surgery.

She is still unable to walk or stand for long periods because of a persistent leg ulcer, and on public occasions resorts to her battery-powered golf cart to move among the crowds. Sources at Balmoral yesterday said the Queen Mother had been absent from the gillies' ball, the principal social event during the Queen's summer holiday, at which members of the Royal Family dance and mingle with castle staff and other local people.

The Prince's disclosure of his grandmother's rediscovered agility, however limited, prompted an immediate recollection from Andy Murray of Highland Regional Council, who met the Prince

during yesterday's visit. Mr Murray remembered seeing the Queen Mother dance at a function in Wick Assembly Rooms 25 years ago, when she was a mere 71: "We were doing the *Dashing White Sergeant*, which involves moving around the room meeting other dancers; when we came across the Queen Mother in the middle of the crowd. She was having a wonderful time and was a lovely dancer, very light on her feet."

The Prince told Mr Murray: "She's thrown the sticks away. She's a great dancer. She's incredible, they just don't make them like that anymore." Earlier in the day he told pensioners at a daycare centre in Wick that the hip operation had given his grandmother an extra six years of mobility.

Shopgirls bring high street cred to the catwalk

By GRACE BRADBERRY, STYLE EDITOR

THE entire fashion world may be looking to Britpop and so-called Britfash for inspiration but yesterday the streetwear label Red Or Dead confounded everyone by turning to the East and the Indian subcontinent instead.

The designer Wayne Hemingway cited Bollywood and the cultural and racial mix of London streetlife as his inspirations for London Fashion Week. There were crocheted tops suited to a chilly English summer worn over ankle-length negligees. Shalwar kameez tunics were layered over tiered bloomers.

But the real surprise was the models. Half of them were blue-eyed blonds, the others were Asians of whom many had not come from model agencies at all. Jo Phillips, the show's stylist, revealed that she had scoured the streets of Southall and other racially mixed suburbs in search of beautiful but "ordinary" girls and boys.

"I rang every model agency that there was and then I began sending posters to hairdressers and shops," Miss Phillips said. Among the professional models used in this East meets West show were Nifa and Nishan, five twins aged 18 who are half Fijian and half British.

Fashion buyers who have seen several big-name girls this week, including Honor Fraser and Emma Balfour, were stunned to see men and women clearly not from the fashion world appearing in the marques at the Natural History Museum. One of the male models simply could not

keep his Scholl sandals on and had to retrieve them twice on his way down the catwalk.

The audience was also surprised by the clothes. With so much talk about Britpop, film crews, buyers and glamour groupies from around the world have come to London this week expecting to see the sort of designs that Blur, Oasis and Pulp might wear.

But according to Hemingway, Britpop is moving on to Eastern influences and he wanted to reflect this. "The timing has been perfect, with *Kula Shaker* [an Asian influenced band] reaching number one just recently," he said. He added that his influences came from Britain rather than abroad.

"I get more excited by going to Southall or wandering around Wembley, than by heading for the East." His sportswear also showed influences close to home — the colours of Tottenham Hotspur football club.

Yesterday also saw shows by the more traditional English designers Amanda Wakeley, Roland Klein and Caroline Charles, who made her name in the Sixties, the last time London was swinging. Pearce Fonda, the young British design duo who have only shown two collections previously, attracted huge attention. Representatives of Printemps, the Paris store, and several New York shops arrived at Harrods to see a wonderfully elegant collection of day-to-evening wear. There were breathtakingly simple sheath dresses with low necklines that draped forward, and very low backs.

"Fashion buyers who have seen several big-name girls this week, including Honor Fraser and Emma Balfour, were stunned to see men and women clearly not from the fashion world appearing in the marques at the Natural History Museum. One of the male models simply could not

Liverpool player misled police over crash

By KATE ALDERSON

NEIL RUDDOCK, the Liverpool football player, was fined £300 with £200 costs yesterday for obstructing a police inquiry into a crash involving his Porsche. Magistrates were told that one officer accused him of telling "blatant lies".

The central defender, aged 28, who was in the Anfield squad against Finland's MyPa-17 last night, is considering an appeal. Ruddock, in a statement read outside Southport Magistrates' Court by his solicitors, said the case had caused him, his family and Liverpool Football Club "a great deal of distress and embarrassment".

The court was told that in January Ruddock spent all afternoon in The Grapes pub at Formby, celebrating a friend's birthday. Anthony Clarke, from Ainsdale, took the keys to Ruddock's £5,000 Porsche Carrera 911 for safe keeping. In the evening Mr Clarke showed the car to Lesley Richards, 17. He drove off at speed but lost control on the A56 Formby bypass. Witnesses said the car, which was written off, crossed the central reservation and hit trees.

PC Ian Barlow of Merseyside Police said that Ruddock, of Formby, Merseyside, twice told police that the car had been stolen. The footballer was arrested after providing a positive breath-test. Deborah Birrell, for the prosecution, said: "Police believed, erroneously, he was the driver of the car."

On February 1, Ruddock admitted to police he had given the car keys to Mr Clarke. "I didn't want to be a grass," he said. "I know I was wrong but I had a few beers."

PC Barlow told Ruddock that his earlier statement had been blatant lies. He replied: "Not blatant lies. I just didn't tell you what I knew."

Clarke admitted obstructing the police, careless driving and driving without insurance. His case was adjourned until October 24. At a separate hearing, Richards, now 18, admitted obstructing police and was fined £50.

Football, pages 40, 44

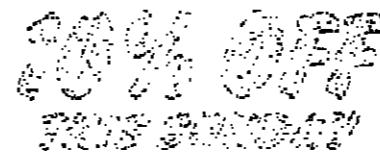
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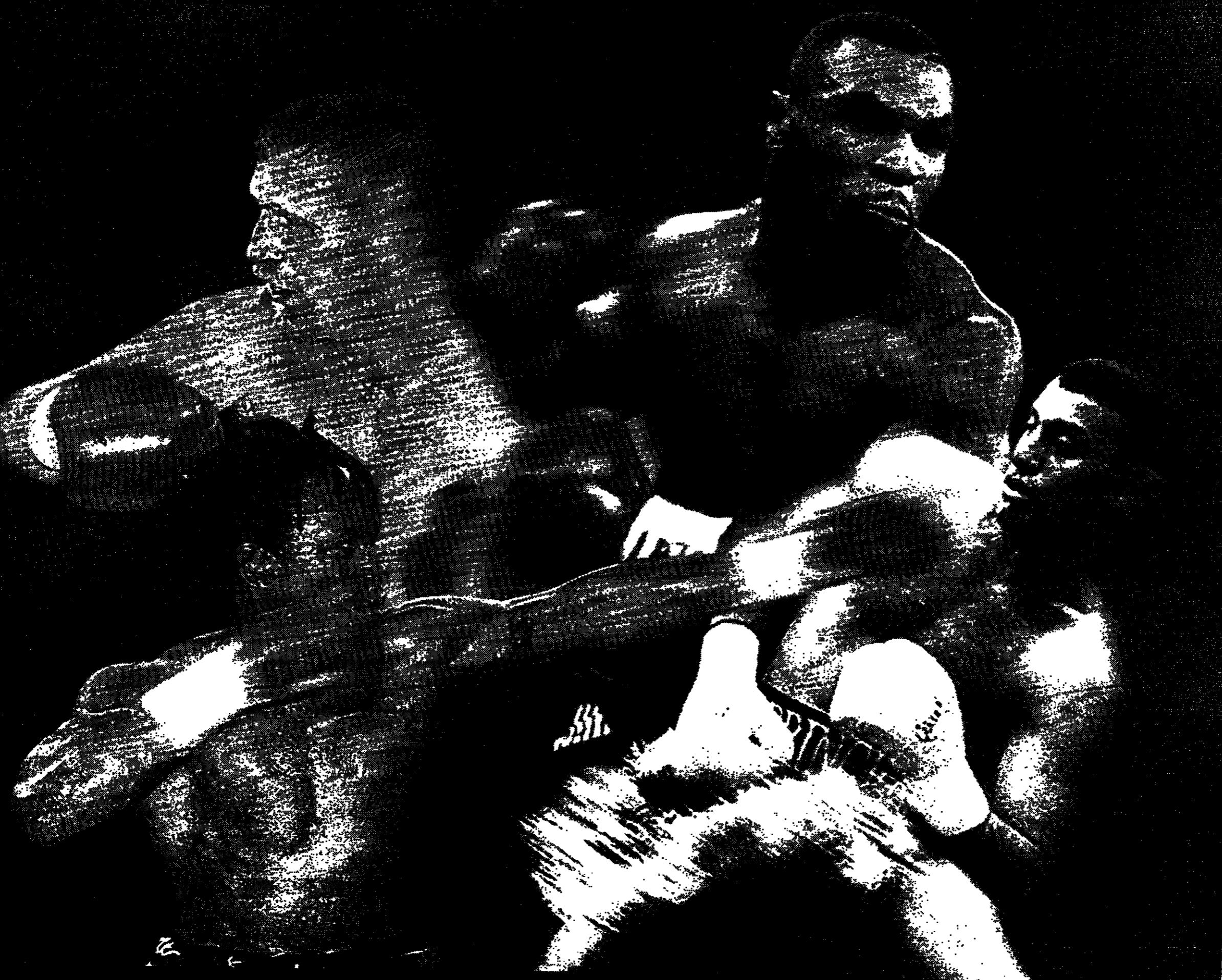
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Villagers weed out organic gardener

BY TIM JONES

FOR Tony Woodcock, his small allotment in the Cotswolds was a haven of organic gardening in a chemically laden landscape. But to villagers it was a weed-choked wilderness.

Their views prevailed with the parish council at Upton St Leonards, Gloucestershire, and Mr Woodcock, 53, was ordered to vacate the plot during a heated confrontation with Jacqueline Ireland, the council clerk. "I was furious with her and I admit I raised my voice before she asked me to leave," he said.

"Over the last nine years I have worked thousands of hours on the plot and I have never used any chemicals or sprays because I feel it is wrong environmentally."

The new tenant has scythed through the weeds. Mr Woodcock, a wrought-iron worker from Matson, Gloucestershire, says that he may sue the council. Mrs Ireland said yesterday: "We have complaints from other growers that thistles were growing three feet high on this land."



Tony Woodcock before the allotment was taken away from him: "I have never used any chemicals or sprays"

still making pointless purchases"



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Child death rates fall as health and safety improve

BY JEREMY LAURANCE

THE health of children under 15 has improved faster over the past 20 years than any other age group, researchers reported yesterday.

Death rates have fallen by 50 per cent in those aged 1 to 14 and by 62 per cent in infants between 1974 and 1994, according to official figures. The only group to show an increase was young men aged 15 to 44, where deaths rose by 5 per cent between 1985 and 1995, chiefly as a result of violence, suicide and Aids.

Karen Dunnell, head of health statistics at the Office of National Statistics, which published the figures in *Population Trends*, said that the main reasons for the decline were fewer accidents, congenital abnormalities and cases of serious respiratory disease.

The improvement in infant mortality - deaths under one year - was largely due to the fall in cot deaths, down 70 per cent between 1988 and 1992.

Each woman fell from a peak of three in the 1960s to 1.8 in 1994 and 1.7 last year.

For the past 20 years the fertility rate - the number of children born to women of child-bearing age - has been below the level of 2.1 necessary to replace the population. Births are still exceeding deaths, apart from a blip in 1983, because the baby boom generation of the 1960s is passing through its maximum child-producing age, but statisticians expect deaths to exceed births by 2020.

Latest figures show a 33 per cent fall in accidents to children between 1990 and 1994. However, a report in the *British Medical Journal* says that a class divide is opening up in relation to child injury with five times as many children from the poorest social class dying in accidents compared with those in the highest social class. In the early 1980s there was a 3.5-fold difference.

Fire deaths are rising in richer families and falling in richer families. Dr Ian Roberts, director of the child health monitoring unit at the Institute of Child Health says that free distribution of smoke alarms should be considered after a study in Oklahoma City in the United States showed that free alarms prevented an estimated 39 deaths or serious injuries.

Figures in *Population Trends* confirm the trend to smaller families. The average number of children born to

Spanish set record, page 12

Growing faster north of the border

BY A STAFF REPORTER

SCOTTISH children are increasing in height faster than English children. The average height of English children grew by 0.5 cm between 1972 and 1979. In Scotland, over the same period, the average increased by 1.1 cm for boys and 0.9 cm for girls.

In 1990, English girls 1.5m tall weighed half a kilogram more than had their equivalents in 1972. Scottish girls weighed up to 1.7 kg more.

The average size of households has almost halved this century from 4.6 persons to 2.5. Married couples with no children are most numerous in the South East, East Anglia and the South West. They are least common in inner-city areas.

Cohabiting couples with no children are most common in Greater London and the Home Counties and least so in southern Scotland and northern England. The proportion of live births outside marriage grew from 13 per cent in 1981 to 32 per cent in 1994.

DIVORCEES have twice the faith in St Valentine that young lovers do, the latest government survey of population trends discloses.

Researchers plotting the day of the week on which couples chose to marry in 1994 discovered a surge of ceremonies in February on a Monday, normally one of the least favoured days for a wedding. On closer examination they discovered the day was February 14 - St Valentine's Day.

The figures were especially high among couples where both partners had been married at least once before, preferred by one in five of those remarrying during the month. Only one in ten of first-time marriages in February took place on the 14th.

"This shows an element of the resilience of romance is going on, especially among those who have a failed marriage behind them," John Haskey, who compiled the report, *Population Trends*, for the Office of National Statistics, said.

Figs bring taste of fading summer

BY ROBIN YOUNG

FRESH figs from Turkey and pomegranates from Spain are now in. As autumn chills creep up there are offers on winter vegetables such as carrots, swede and cabbages. Baking potatoes are also on offer. The ideal baker produces a crusty skin and a fluffy interior. The best are Record, Marfona and Kerrs Pink, Desirée, Maris Piper and King Edward are acceptable. Avon Nadine, Cara, Romano, Promotions include:

Asda: 1kg carrots 12.18 a kg, lamb chops 36.82 a kg, chicken fillets £3.89 for 2kg, chicken breasts £2.48 for two, papaya 169 each, star fruit 39p each, mango 39p each.

Budgens: fresh beef topside/silverside/rump £4.29 a kg, chicken quarters £1.39 for 550g, Lincolnshire pork chops £1.59 for 225g, Cornish pasties 49p each.

Royal Gala apples 45p lb.

Co-op: fresh whole chicken £4.89 for 2.2kg, premium Lincolnshire sausages £1.69 for 800g, onion bhajis 99p for 325g, deep dish rich beef pie £1.26 for 454g, tomatoes 49p for six.

Dewhurst: topside/silverside/rump £1.99 for 100g, gammon steaks £1.99 for 340g, size 3 grade A eggs 89p a dozen.

Harrods: smoked salmon pillow £2.95 for 100g, free-range oven-ready geese £8.50 a kg, Munich weisswurst £1.39 for 100g, ostrich sausage £2 for 100g, lamb samosa £1.29 each, Dusnayre Blue cheese £1.25 a kg.

Iceland: chargrilled quarter-poppers £1.49 for four, battered cod fillets £2.99 for four, cod Normandy 99p for two, smoked haddock fillets £2.99 for 680g, button sprouts 79p for 907g, summer fruits flan £1.29 for 4/6 portions, chocolate cheesecake 49p.

Dewhurst: topside/silverside £4.29 a kg, boneless leg of pork £3.45 a kg, skinless chicken fillets £3.25 for 540g, haddock fillets £1.95 a lb, salmon joints £2.95 a lb, Desirée baking potatoes 24p a lb.

Waitrose: chickens £2.65 for 1.1 to 1.8kg, stuffed turkey thigh £3.50 for 800g, frozen oven chips 99p for 2lb, frozen chopped spinach 69p a kg.

Swiss-style muesli 99p for 750g, pure grapefruit juice 97p a lit.

Mexican honey £1.35 for 454g.

Brown's top tax rate would cost TV host an extra £300,000

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY AND SUSAN EMMETT

UNDER Gordon Brown's proposals for a 50 per cent top tax rate, the television and radio presenter Chris Tarrant would pay almost £300,000 more on his newly negotiated £3 million salary.

Increasing the top tax band from the current rate of 40 per cent would land Mr Tarrant with a total bill of more than £1.48 million on the three-year contract that he has just signed. The Shadow Chancellor's plans would also mean that Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber — said to earn more than £6 million a year — would pay an extra £600,000 tax, taking his total payment to almost £3 million a year.

Tax experts say that few people earning more than £100,000 would be able to avoid paying more. Loopholes have been steadily closed and there is now such a considerable body of anti-income tax avoidance rules that it is virtually impossible to escape.

Among the high earners

who would feel the pinch of a 50 per cent top rate are managing directors of the top 350 FT-SE companies and senior partners and actuaries in law and accountancy firms. Consultants in the National Health Service earn salaries of £30,000 upwards but can more than triple that through private practice.

City dealers heads of fund management divisions and trading department heads will easily take home £100,000 a year, and often two or three times that in bonuses. Top entertainers and musicians bump up their earnings through royalties.

However, even in the Nineties, the number of women in this bracket is low. Few reach the upper echelons of major companies and law or become chief executives of FT-SE 100 companies.

Maurice Fitzpatrick, tax specialist at the accountants Chantrey Vellscott, does not believe that a 50 per cent rate

would result in the flight of well-paid executives. He said: "If any of our clients came to us wondering whether they should go offshore to avoid these proposals, we would ask them whether they were prepared to uproot themselves for the sake of an extra 10 per cent tax."

In the past, high-flyers have paid accountants to find ways of converting income into capital gains, so that they can defer or avoid tax. Mr Fitzpatrick says this practice is now much less common.

"In the Seventies, the top rate of tax was 98 per cent, whereas gains were charged at 30 per cent, making it worthwhile to enter schemes that turned income into gains," he said. "Now the top rate of capital gains is 40 per cent."

I doubt whether people will spend thousands in professional fees in the attempt to turn income into capital gains, with the risk that they could be



Aiming for the top: Gordon Brown's 50 per cent tax rate would cost Chris Tarrant and Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber hundreds of thousands of pounds

£3m eases strain of early mornings

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE battle for breakfast radio ratings grew more costly yesterday when Chris Tarrant signed a £3 million deal with London's Capital Radio.

The three-year deal puts him ahead of his Radio 1 rival, Chris Evans, whose £1.5 million contract runs only until late 1997. Mr Tarrant's programme claims two million listeners. Mr Evans, who has recently been criticised for the content

and language of his show, has about seven million. Matthew Baister, head of BBC Radio, warned him on Wednesday about the content of the show.

Mr Tarrant, who worked as an English teacher before beginning a career in regional radio, had been considering giving up the job because of the 5.30am daily alarm call. He said yesterday that it was his love of the work, not the money, that had changed his mind. "Breakfast radio is incredibly exciting. There's lots

of silly stuff but also for many listeners I am their first point of contact with the overnight news and am able to give updates as they happen."

Mr Tarrant hosts the television show *Man O'War*, for which he receives £200,000 a year, and owns an Italian clothing shop that brings in £1 million a year. Martin King, Capital director, said that he was worth the money. "He is still the most popular broadcaster in London," she said.

Ousted head calls for curbs on governors

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

THE ousted headmistress of a leading girls' school called yesterday for governors of independent schools to be prevented from abusing their powers in the treatment of senior staff.

Speaking publicly for the first time since her departure from Malvern Girls' College five months ago, Anne Lee said measures were needed to counter the so-called "football manager syndrome" in independent schools. Heads are increasingly vulnerable to dismissal as soon as results or pupil numbers dip.

Dr Lee is prevented by the terms of her severance agreement from discussing the events that led to her resignation in April. A businesswoman and education consultant with no teaching experience in schools, she clashed with the college governors and left after less than two years in charge.

The school was suspended from the Girls' Schools Association over its treatment of Dr Lee. But John Firth, the chairman of governors, accused the association of acting high-handedly and insisted that the school followed "perfectly good" employment practice.

Margaret Rudland, who chairs the association, said it

had received the assurances it had sought about procedures at Malvern. "Subject to a contract being approved, the way is now clear for the next head to become a member of GSA."

Dr Lee recently became a governor of Queenswood, an independent girls' school in Hertfordshire. She intends to use her new position to campaign for a regulatory framework, possibly with legal powers, covering all school governors. In an interview she said: "The important question is — who governs the governors? There is no doubt that increasing competition has led to more short-termism: a lot of heads believe their governing bodies respond too quickly to the league tables or changes in the roll."

Governing bodies should include parents and be much more open, Dr Lee said. "When society is moving towards more democracy and openness, it is a bit of an anomaly that parents and staff cannot find out more about the running of their schools."

Now an education adviser with a variety of clients, Dr Lee said she had not ruled out a return to headship. "It is wonderfully challenging, a very exciting role."

She remained convinced that heads without teaching experience could be accepted by their staff, saying that heads would increasingly need an aptitude for business "because the pressures of running a large organisation are similar in some ways, no matter what the organisation is".

But the demands of headship were not fully recognised. "It is the least researched and most difficult leadership role I know; no other organisation has as many stakeholders as a school. To co-ordinate the needs and wishes of governors, pupils, parents, the local community and often the church is extremely difficult."

Education, page 37



Teachers' wages hit by agency collapse

BY JON ASHWORTH

POLICE are investigating an employment agency whose collapse threatens the livelihood of hundreds of teachers across Britain.

Schools from Tyneside to Cornwall are thought to be affected by the demise of First Quality Supply Teachers, which provided teaching staff on assignment from at least five offices. Initial inquiries suggest that up to £500,000 may be at stake.

First Quality's founder, Mahmoud el Zalabany, 49, an Egyptian national also known as Samy, has not been seen for at least two months. It is thought he may have gone to Egypt, South Africa or Australia.

First Quality's major contractor to Hampshire County Council, which has been contacted by at least 34 teachers who claim to be owed up to £2,000 each. The agency received payments centrally, then forwarded

cheques to teachers on its books.

Police raided First Quality's offices in Southampton, Hampshire, on Wednesday. The telephones had been cut off and there were signs the occupants had left in a hurry. Mail from other First Quality offices in Torquay, London, Manchester and Bristol had been redirected. Police are anxious to speak to Jane Spencer, who appears to be a shareholder in First Quality.

DC Peter Davies of Portsmouth Central Police said that, potentially, hundreds of teachers were involved. In addition to Hampshire County Council, First Quality placed staff on assignment with schools in the West Country, the Home Counties, London, Manchester, Yorkshire and the North East.

Teachers who may have suffered losses are asked to contact Portsmouth Central Police on 01705 321111.

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Perry offers Nato security partnership to Moscow

FROM MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT
IN BERGEN

FACED by a renewed blast from Moscow against Nato expansion, the United States yesterday offered Russia a security partnership that would involve unprecedented access to alliance affairs.

William Perry, the American Defence Secretary, said that apart from closer political consultation, Russia should also be allowed to have permanent liaison officers at alliance command headquarters

and that they should take part in certain military contingency planning. One senior American official even suggested that the new partnership could be modelled on the arrangement for France over the past 30 years under which Paris had full political membership without being part of the integrated military structure.

Some of the American ideas have caused alarm among other Nato partners. It was emphasised that, whatever is agreed, there would be no possibility of Russia being consulted in cases involving Arti-

cle 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty when the territory of a member state is threatened by hostile military action. However, speaking after the end of a two-day informal meeting of Nato defence ministers in Norway, Mr Perry made it clear that Nato had to develop a new level of co-operation with Russia to persuade Moscow to take a more relaxed view of alliance expansion.

His attempts yesterday to present Nato's case for expansion, however, failed to impress General Igor Rodionov, the Russian Defence Minister, who attended a

special session with his Nato counterparts in Bergen.

After hearing Mr Perry's ideas he announced at a press conference that the Russian public and political leadership failed to see how Nato could justify expansion to the east. He said that Russia was alarmed at the prospect of Nato enlarging and that any new members would change the balance of forces which had been agreed under the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty.

General Rodionov's hawkish line echoed what has once again be-

come Russian policy towards Nato expansion, after a brief period of more conciliatory tones.

In Berlin in June, Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister, appeared to suggest that Moscow was no longer so worried about Nato expansion but that it remained opposed to any movement of alliance troops and infrastructure towards the Russian border.

The strongest opposition to Nato expansion was voiced by General Aleksandr Lebed, the Russian security chief, who undoubtedly wrote

General Rodionov's script for his trip to Bergen.

Before meeting the Russian minister, Mr Perry had outlined four ways of developing closer working relations with Moscow: setting up permanent military offices for Russian officers at Nato command headquarters and for alliance officers in Moscow; consulting over contingency planning for a follow-on peacekeeping force in Bosnia next year; regular meetings with the Russian Defence Minister and his staff; and a share in military planning for Nato's new Combined

Join Task Forces. The Americans, who are backed by the British, insist that Nato expansion must go ahead as planned. However, President Chirac of France is understood to be adamant that such an expansion should wait until an agreement has been reached with the Russians.

□ Nuclear deal: Russia signed an agreement with the United States and Norway aimed at preventing the indiscriminate dumping of obsolete Russian nuclear submarines and reactors in the waters near the Arctic Circle.

Bardot threat to abandon 'joyless' France

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRENCH national pride suffered a triple blow this week. The former actress Brigitte Bardot declared France was no fun any more and threatened to emigrate to Italy; the actress Isabelle Adjani said Paris was too dirty and moved to Switzerland; and Algeria announced that English would replace French as the main foreign language taught in schools.

In an interview to publicise her newly published memoirs Mme Bardot announced she was sick of France, and in particular, the "invasion" of Islamic immigrants whose ritual slaughter of sheep she has repeatedly condemned.

"If that continues, such barbarity on our territory, I will want to leave France. I will go to Italy. France has lost its charm. Things have become ugly, there is no feeling any more. In Italy I sense that there is still joy, people play the mandolin, make pasta. In France everyone is depressed," she told *France-Soir* yesterday.

Mme Bardot's outspoken support for Jean-Marie Le Pen, the National Front leader, and her anti-immigrant stance has provoked a wave of anger and a lawsuit for allegedly inciting racial hatred. She has made no secret of her distaste for modern France.

"I hate it, I detest it, I find it unbearable ... The decadence, the moral and physical dirtiness, the ugliness, the lack of aesthetics, the loss of essential values, and also pornography

phy," Mme Bardot fumed. As for men, "they are almost all gay", she told *Elle* magazine.

Over the past few days Mme Bardot's attacks on her homeland have reached such a pitch that several commentators have expressed the opinion that the sooner she leaves France, the better.

Mme Adjani's decision to quit her native land, although for different reasons, has been equally wounding to France's *amour propre*. On Wednesday the film star and latter-day equivalent of Mme Bardot as France's most adored sex icon declared that, owing to increasing air pollution in Paris, she was moving to Geneva with her 16-month-old son by the British actor, Daniel Day-Lewis.

"Pollution in Paris has reached such high levels, particularly in summer. To live in Geneva is a solution that will allow me to breathe in every sense of the word," she told *La Tribune de Genève*.

But perhaps the most telling snub came from Algeria, where the Government of the former French colony declared that English would supersede French as the second language after Arabic.

The continuing political violence in Algeria and the recent clampdown on immigration to France have helped to weaken links between the two countries. The recent signing of deals with British and US oil companies may also have prompted the ruling, which takes immediate effect.



Palaeontologists from the University of Chapingo, Mexico, investigating fossilised bones from seven mammoths found by workers digging a septic pit 40 miles from Mexico City. The discovery, on Wednesday, has been hailed as the most important fossil discovery in the area

Five more patients are waiting for legal euthanasia

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE
IN SYDNEY

FIVE more terminally ill people are waiting to die under the Northern Territory's euthanasia laws and another could take place within weeks, the Australian doctor who assisted the world's first legal suicide said yesterday. Dr Philip Nitschke,

who has been a leading advocate of the euthanasia laws, said that the death of Bob Dent, who ended his life by self-administering a lethal injection at the weekend, would pave the way for more people to be able to do the same.

"There is little doubt that the events surrounding this first use of the act will make it much easier for the next terminally ill person," he said. Under the

euthanasia legislation, a patient must prove to three doctors, one a psychiatrist, that he or she is terminally ill, suffering unacceptable pain and beyond treatment. Up to now, fears by doctors that assisting a suicide could leave them open to criminal charges if the law is overturned have left patients unable to secure enough signatures.

Mr Dent managed to get the go-ahead after John Ellard, a Sydney psychiatrist, agreed to fly to Darwin to back his case.

Mr Ellard yesterday described Mr Dent, 66, a former carpenter with no children, as "an intelligent and sensitive man, fully aware of all the issues".

Mr Dent ended his life on Sunday after sharing a meal with Judy, his wife of 20 years, at their Darwin home.

Atom bomb spymaster dies

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN MOSCOW

PAVEL SUDOPLATOV, the Soviet spymaster who plotted the theft of the atomic bomb secret and the assassination of Leon Trotsky, has died in Moscow, aged 89.

Sudoplakov, a lieutenant-general in the KGB, died on Tuesday at his home after a recent stroke, the daily *Moskovsky Komsomolets* reported. His son was with him. It said the KGB's successor agency, the Federal Security Service, planned a funeral for him with military honours.

In the 1930s, Sudoplakov headed the branch of Stalin's secret police which carried out political assassinations.

Among the murders he engineered was that of Trotsky, Stalin's arch-rival, in Mex-

ico in 1940. In his last interview, published yesterday in the daily *Nezvezdnyaya Gazeta*, Sudoplakov said he never considered himself a terrorist, but a fighter against "terrorists battling the Soviet State". In the 1940s, he oversaw Soviet spying on the Manhattan Project, the Second World War programme to develop the atomic bomb.

In his autobiography, *Special Tasks: The Memoirs of an Unwanted Witness - A Soviet Spymaster*, published in 1994, he wrote about the "moles" he had at Manhattan Project labs in Los Alamos, New Mexico, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and Chicago. He said he obtained a description of the bomb's design in 1945

and used it to develop Soviet nuclear weapons.

Sudoplakov claimed that Robert Oppenheimer, the head of Los Alamos lab, and physicists Niels Bohr, Enrico Fermi and Leo Szilard, gave the KGB information about the project.

The FBI said after a 1995 investigation that there was no evidence to back up his claim. The Russian Foreign Intelligence Service agreed and said he had exaggerated his own role.

After Stalin died in 1953, Sudoplakov was convicted of collaborating with Lavrentii Beria, the secret police chief who was executed. He was freed from prison in 1969 and rehabilitated in 1992.

21 die in Russia as train hits bus

MOSCOW: Twenty-one people, including 19 children, were killed and 18 injured in southern Russia when a school bus was hit by a train in thick fog at an unmanned level crossing (Thomas de Waal writes).

The train driver said that he did not see the bus until it was too late to stop.

Biting the dust

MANILA: Missing weapons used in Philippines coup attempt against former President Aquino cannot be recovered because termites ate all the records about them, a Senate hearing was told. (AP)

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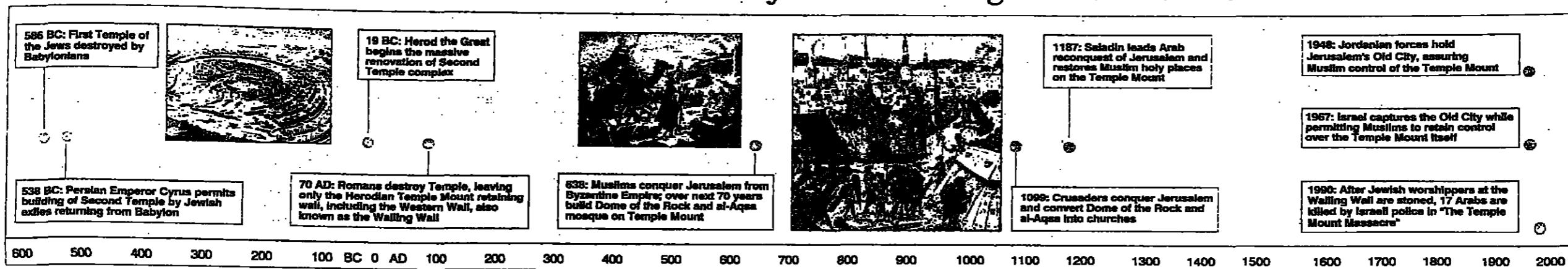
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Holy site that has witnessed millennia of bloody clashes brings Muslims and Jews to brink of war



THE unlikely catalyst for the latest blood-letting between Arabs and Jews is a 500-yard underground tunnel that exposes the Herodian foundations of the Wailing Wall and has been open for some time, with only one entry and exit point, in the Jewish quarter of the occupied Old City (Christopher Walker writes). It was the decision

to open a second exit on the Via Dolorosa, ostensibly to increase access for tourists, that sparked the latest violence and provided a reminder that Jerusalem's holy sites remain at the heart of the struggle between Muslim and Jew in the Holy Land.

The Israeli-dug tunnel was re-discovered a few years ago, having

been uncovered originally in the 19th century and neglected. Until the 1980s, when Israel's Ministry of Religion uncovered the narrow underground route that once served as an aqueduct, no one had entered it for more than 100 years and it had remained full of mud and water under homes in the Muslim quarter of the Old City

conquered by Israel in 1967. A warning of trouble came in 1988 when work on the tunnel provoked Arab riots. It was rumoured that Israeli archaeologists were involved in a secret hunt for treasures from the First and Second Temples, including the fabled Ark of the Covenant.

Muslim clerics claimed on Tues-

day, after the second exit had been opened by Israelis acting under cover of darkness and with a heavy guard, that the tunnel runs under the Temple Mount and was endangering the stability of the buildings above. They also alleged that the tunnel — whose entrance is only 3ft wide — was a first step by extremist Jews to tear down the

Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa, Islam's third holiest shrine after those in Mecca and Medina.

"Those who destroy what is underneath [the compound] will eventually destroy what is above," argued Sheikh Jamal Rifai, an influential cleric. Yehud Olmer, Jerusalem's Likud Mayor and the main driving force behind the new

tunnel opening, dismissed the allegation as ridiculous. He said that the tunnel ran alongside but not underneath Temple Mount, and that Israel respected Muslim administration of the Islamic holy sites. Independent archaeologists support the denial by their Israeli counterparts that the tunnel undermines the foundations of al-Aqsa.

Backstage battle to salvage a peace process in tatters

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

DIPLOMATS yesterday struggled against an hourly rising casualty toll to put together what few pieces of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process remained. But there was a realisation that drastic action would have to be taken if even the veneer of mutual confidence that underpinned the 1993 accord was to be restored.

The backstairs negotiators, including Ed Abingdon, the American Consul-General in Jerusalem, were only too aware that another deadline looms which could make yesterday's bloodshed fade into insignificance: at today's weekly noon Muslim prayers, Palestinians have vowed to converge on al-Aqsa mosque, the site of the tunnel which sparked the latest fighting.

"If some sort of agreement is not in place by then, what has been described as 'a sacred tinderbox' could very easily cause an even greater conflagration," a European diplomat said. "The combination of religion, nationalism and repeated television images of the fighting could spill over into something even more dangerous."

The clashes, shown on a host of television channels, challenged the basic premise of the peace deal signed amid the long forgotten optimism of September 1993 — that the two sides would co-operate in maintaining security in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Palestinians, with their lesser firepower, were the main victims yesterday, as they were in the 1987-1993 intifada. But it was the many

right-wing Jews opposed to any further implementation of the peace deal, negotiated by the former Labour Government, whose hand was strengthened.

"We have seen that a monster has been created in our midst in the person of the 30,000 Palestinian police force that we allowed to be armed under our very noses," said Moti Cohen, a supporter of Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Government.

Leading Palestinians like Saeb Erekat, the Jericho-based negotiator, disclosed that they had publicly and privately been warning the new Israeli Government of the resentment boiling among their people. "It became clear to the Israeli Government that the fear of a new intifada is not a vain one," wrote Oded Granot, a commentator in the daily *Maariv*.

"It was not the tunnel-opening alone that led to the outbreak of rioting in the territories, but the accumulation of frustration from what appeared on the surface to be a complete deadlock in the peace process."

Amid serious objections being voiced from the Israeli Right about the future role of the Palestinian police, many of them former guerrillas with little discipline or training, Hemi Shalev, another *Maariv* columnist, wrote: "A continuation of the existing situation will quickly drag everyone back to the era of blood, intifada, terror and mourning, this time with 30,000 armed and revenge-hungry Palestinian policemen lined up against the Israeli Defence Forces."



Netanyahu: he was told of boiling resentment



An Ultra-Orthodox Jew in the tunnel near Temple Mount that sparked the violence

Onslaught by Islamic militia turns Kabul 'into ghost town'

BY ZAHID HUSSAIN AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

WITH forces of the rebel Taliban Islamic militia poised on the edge of Kabul, Afghan government troops appeared yesterday to be abandoning the capital, witnesses said.

A correspondent in the city said it was "like a ghost town", with troops abandoning checkpoints. Tanks and lorries laden with troops had been seen heading north away from the city, he said.

Taliban sources in neighbouring Pakistan had earlier claimed that their militia forces, which already control most of Afghanistan, had entered the city from the east and were only three miles from President Rabbani's palace. Taliban seeks to topple the President and enforce strict Islamic rule.

Official sources have denied

that Taliban forces have entered the city, but government troops guarding the main road east of Kabul confirmed that the rebels had seized the nearby military academy.

Thousands of civilians and foreign aid workers fled the besieged city, some hanging out of packed buses or riding on the roof. Other residents crowded markets in central Kabul to stock up on food and essentials, fearing that fighting would soon reach the streets of the city, which has been under rocket attack for years.

"Basically, the city is cornered," said Esther Robertson of the Care British aid group. "We feel that it is better to go now while we have a chance." Hundreds of fighters have reportedly been killed on both

sides in the two-day battle for the capital, in which Taliban forces have attacked on three fronts. The Islamic group received a serious setback in an attempt to take over the city when Maulvi Borjan, its commander, was killed in a battle near Pul-e-Charkhi, an eastern district of the capital.

Yesterday the area was strewn with the bodies of Taliban fighters. The Government claimed to have killed 150 rebels, while losing only 21 of its troops, adding that 21 soldiers had been wounded.

But a Taliban spokesman said 100 government soldiers had been killed in the battle for the military base, six miles from the city centre.

Taliban sources in the Pakistani city of Peshawar claimed that the militia had captured

Six-month gap in 'Filegate' records

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

SENATE Republicans have discovered a six-month gap in White House records showing what read as improperly-obtained FBI files on hundreds of party officials.

Seeking an explanation for the discrepancy, with its echoes of the 18-month gap on President Nixon's Watergate tapes, the Republican-controlled Judiciary Committee is trying to subpoena Marjorie Anderson, the aide responsible for the logbook. But she has gone into hiding.

The White House insisted the gap was the result of nothing more sinister than bureaucratic inefficiency. "I believe the [logbook] wasn't kept. We tried our best to do it. There was a period of time when we didn't," said Craig Livingstone, the former head of the White House personnel security office which obtained the files.

The White House also released copies of the outdated Secret Service lists of White House passholders on which it claims Mr Livingstone's office based its requests for the FBI files. Throughout the "Filegate" scandal it has insisted the requests were merely a bureaucratic blunder, not an attempt to dig up dirt on Republicans.

The gap lasts from March to September 1994, when Miss Anderson left the White House. Orrin Hatch, the committee's chairman, said Miss Anderson was evading US marshals trying to serve her a subpoena to testify.

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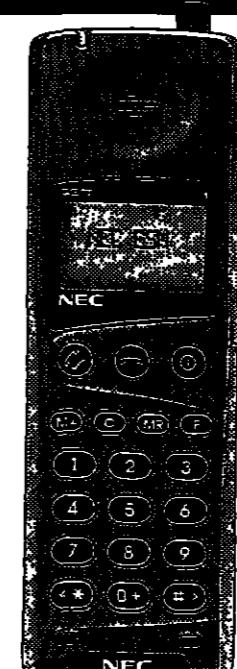
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An Airbus A300-B4 jet is prepared at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York for its first flight for Pan Am.

The American airline returned to the skies yesterday after five years' absence

of its former executives. Martin Shugrue. "We have a very powerful brand name that gives us instant market recognition," he said. The company will initially concentrate on a small number of commuter routes in the

New York. After 75 million miles of travel, and 188 days without a shower or a hairwash, Shannon Lucid, the American astronaut, yesterday returned to Earth from her six-month stay on Russia's Mir space station (Quentin Letts writes).

Mrs Lucid, 53, whom NASA has taken to calling "the Queen of the Universe", was greeted by her husband and was said to be in "great shape". Owing to the effects of her long stay in space, however, she was unable to walk on her own, and needed support from NASA medical doctors.

THE gap lasts from March to September 1994, when Miss Anderson left the White House. Orrin Hatch, the committee's chairman, said Miss Anderson was evading US marshals trying to serve her a subpoena to testify.

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Van Gogh masterpiece worth £25m 'is a fake'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A PAINTING attributed to Vincent Van Gogh and worth an estimated £25 million may be a fake, according to French press reports, alleging that an investigation into its authenticity has been covered up.

The doubts about the painting have added fresh controversy to a story involving allegations of corruption, greed and a lawsuit that has already cost French taxpayers millions of francs.

Jardin d'Avuers, believed to have been painted by Van Gogh just days before his suicide in July 1890, is due to be sold at auction in Paris next December, following the death of its latest owner, the banker Jean-Marc Verne.

According to a report in *Le Canard Enchaîné*, a journalist at *Le Figaro* carried out an investigation into "doubts among experts over the authenticity of this work". The resulting report has not been published, the satirical newspaper claimed, because Verne was a "big purveyor of lies" to the owner of *Le Figaro*, Robert Hersant.

Sjaar van Heugten, conservator at the Vincent Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, has insisted that "there is not a single doubt about its authenticity", a view backed by prominent Van Gogh scholars. The claim that the painting may not be genuine, however, is proving highly embarrassing to the French Government.

Jean-Jacques Walter, the art collector who sold the painting to Verne for Fr55 million in 1989, later sued the French state, claiming that he had been prevented from realising its full value since the Culture Ministry had classed *Jardin d'Avuers* as a national treasure and banned him from selling it abroad.

Last February, France's highest civil court estimated the painting's value on the international market at Fr200 million (£26 million), and ordered the Government to pay M Walter Fr145 million in compensation.

The extraordinary saga of the painting has also been tinged by corruption allegations. In 1994, M Walter's son alleged that in the 1980s the

family lawyer had been approached to make a deal in which an export licence for the painting would be provided in exchange for massive bribes.

M Walter claimed that former Ministers of Culture, Jack Lang and François Léotard, had demanded £5 million and £3 million respectively. Both

politicians have strongly denied the claims.

Questions about the painting's authenticity relate to its uncertain provenance. One catalogue cites Johanna Van Gogh-Bonger, the painter's sister-in-law, as the original owner, but another names Amédée Schuffenecker, a collector with a highly dubious reputation who sold a number of fakes. Schuffenecker's brother, Claude-Emile, was a friend of the painter and is known to have executed a number of "pastiche", including at least one of Van Gogh's paintings.

Several experts believe the

painting, *Jardin d'Avuers*, attributed to Van Gogh, has already cost French taxpayers millions of francs

latter with a highly dubious reputation who sold a number of fakes. Schuffenecker's brother, Claude-Emile, was a friend of the painter and is known to have executed a number of "pastiche", including at least one of Van Gogh's paintings.

Several experts believe the

Government may make a pre-emptive bid for the painting before the auction on December 9. Having already paid to keep the painting in France, the state may now feel obliged to come up with millions more, if only to reassure voters that their money has not been spent on a fake.

However breathtaking the

Hong Kong to have a royal send-off

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A SENIOR member of the Royal Family will join British troops and civilians at a sunset ceremony on the Hong Kong waterfront on June 30 to mark Britain's final departure from the colony.

The ceremony will take place at the East Tamar site on Hong Kong island, home of the old British military headquarters, before a separate event at the Hong Kong convention centre at midnight to mark the formal handover to China.

Details of the two ceremonies were finalised yesterday at a two-hour meeting in New York between Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, and his Chinese counterpart, Qian Qichen. The two ministers also agreed that Britain will maintain a 180-strong consulate-general in Hong Kong after the handover, the largest British consular office anywhere.

About 50 of the staff at the

new consulate now being built on Supreme Court Road will be British diplomats, with the remaining 130 local staff. The same functions are now performed by a staff of 80 at the Joint Liaison Group and the Trade Office, of which about half are local people.

Serious differences remain, however, over China's plans to establish a Provisional Legislature before the handover which would overlap with the elected Legislative Council that Peking plans to scrap.

Britain originally had wanted the formal handover ceremony to be held outside, like the separate British event, to accommodate the many dignitaries who are expected to attend.

Instead, the ceremony will take place in the spectacular glass extension now being added to the convention centre, which can hold some 4,000 people.

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SAVE £100

CURRY'S PRICE £599.99

MATSHI 28" NICAM Stereo TV with Fastext

SAVE £100

CURRY'S PRICE £599.99

PANASONIC 28" NICAM Stereo TV with Fastext

SAVE £100

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 27 1996

BT stakes £1.1bn in French venture

By ERIC REGULY

BRITISH TELECOM made its second-largest foreign investment yesterday by agreeing to pay £1.1 billion for a 25 per cent stake in a company formed to compete with France Telecom.

The investment in Cegotel largely completes BT's European strategy, which is designed to give it broad exposure to the Continent's top markets. Since 1993, BT has formed joint ventures in Spain, Germany, Italy, Sweden and The Netherlands. Switzerland and Belgium are its remaining targets.

Sir Peter Bonfield, BT's chief executive, said the Cegotel deal is part of the strategy to make continental Europe part of "our extended market". Cegotel will apply for a full operator's licence, allowing it to compete in every sector of the market when deregulation comes into effect in 1998. Currently, it is limited to providing corporate and mobile-phone services.

Cegotel brings BT into partnership with Compagnie Générale des Eaux, the water-to-healthcare group that has targeted the telecoms industry as its next growth area. Générale has an effective 50 per cent of Cegotel. SBC, formerly South Western Bell, the American regional phone company, has 15 per cent and Mannesmann, the German industrial group, has 10 per cent. The ownership levels may vary somewhat when the final agreement is made.

BT has provided the majority of Cegotel's cash reserves. Its investment values the new company at £4.4 billion. BT will also provide technological expertise such as customer service and billing systems, hardware such as network switches, and its Concert portfolio of international services.

The other partners are to provide non-cash assets, chief of which is Générale's controlling stake in SFR, the second-largest mobile-phone company in France, which is 20 per cent-owned by Vodafone, the UK's largest mobile phone company.

SFR will provide the bulk of Cegotel's growth until it receives a full telecoms licence. SFR now has 700,000 customers and claims to be recruiting 40 per cent of all new mobile phone subscribers. It expects to be profitable by 1998 after posting a loss of Fr769 million last year, and forecasts annual sales of Fr16 billion by 2000.

If it receives a full licence, Cegotel would be able to provide fixed-line services to residential customers. To do so it will either have to build its own network or agree an interconnection regime with France Telecom.

Analysts said that the interconnection deal, the more likely scenario, would be crucial to Cegotel's viability. If France Telecom charges too much, Cegotel will have trouble becoming comfortably profitable.

In a separate deal, BT said that it is bidding for the telecoms network of SNCF, the national train system. If it wins, BT would have an instant national transmission system for voice and data traffic. BT would probably transfer the system to Cegotel.

BT said that Cegotel will be "marginally earnings dilutive" in the short term. The £1.1 billion investment was exceeded only by BT's \$4.3 billion purchase in 1993 of 20 per cent of MCI, America's second-largest long-distance carrier.

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Difficult number, page 27



French connection: Philippe Germond, left, SFR managing director, with Sir Peter Bonfield, BT chief executive, yesterday

Managers of big firms still lead way in pay

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

TOP managers in large companies are earning an average of £26,000 a year or £1,654.80 a week, according to the Office for National Statistics' New Earnings Survey. Managers received 6.2 per cent more than last year's unpublished level. Top managers in the period after the Greenbury report on boardroom pay are far ahead of their nearest rival, company treasurers at £862.10, and then medical practitioners at £814.60.

BT said that Cegotel will be "marginally earnings dilutive" in the short term. The £1.1 billion investment was exceeded only by BT's \$4.3 billion purchase in 1993 of 20 per cent of MCI, America's second-largest long-distance carrier.

The level for top male managers is even higher, at £1,733.30 a week, or more than £90,000 a year. The bottom-paid job for men, by contrast, is listed as kitchen porters, at £164.40, or £8,500 a year. For

women, doctors still top the pay league at £706.90, since there are statistically too few top company managers for a valid entry, while the lowest-paid job for women is also a kitchen porter, at £142.90.

According to the ONS overall average earnings now stand at £351.70 per week, or about £18,300 a year. This is a rise of 4.1 per cent on last year. Average earnings for men in April, the NES' sample point, were £391.60 and for women £283, showing little change in the ratio of female to male earnings.

The NES showed that the earnings gap in Britain continued to widen, with the weekly earnings of the high-

est-paid 10 per cent of employees rising 5.4 per cent compared with the lowest decile, which saw a 4.3 per cent rise.

Regionally, East Anglia saw the largest rise in earnings, at 5.4 per cent, and Greater London the smallest, at 3.2 per cent.

The figures provided trade unions with a new target for a minimum wage as Government figures lifted the level of a proposed pay floor to £4.10 an hour.

Unions will use the NES figure to push bargaining claims with companies and to increase pressure on the Labour Party to set a precise statutory national minimum wage figure.

Brewing helps Guinness to toast record half year

By CLARE STEWART



A STRONG first-half contribution from its brewing activities helped Guinness, the drinks group, to a record half-year profit. For the six months to June 30, pre-tax profits rose 5 per cent to £357 million, beating City forecasts.

Tony Greener, Guinness chairman, said that the interim results marked a further step for the group in meeting its "twin objective of growing the business and raising the return to shareholders".

Earnings per share rose 6 per cent to 12.3p, while the dividend is being increased 8 per cent to 4.55p.

Operating profits in the brewing arm rose 5 per cent to £119 million. Boosting this

increase was a recovery in the Irish beer market which helped the Irish business to lift volumes 7 per cent. Increased marketing in the UK paid off as consumption of draught

Guinness hit record levels, while in the US volumes topped 30 per cent.

Newer products such as its Kilkenny Irish beer also had a strong first half, while, in its pubs division, the group continues to roll out its Irish Pub outlets. Some 200 have opened this year with the most recent in Vienna, taking the total to 1,000. A year-end target of 1,250 is planned.

The sales pattern in United Distillers, the larger spirits arm of Guinness, was more variable in the first half. Profits dipped from £257 million to £255 million, while there was a 4 per cent drop in scotch volumes. The shares fell 6p to 448.2p.

Tempus, page 26

Jardine Fleming executives moved

By ROBERT MILLER

ROBERT FLEMING, the private merchant bank, has unveiled a far-reaching reshuffle among top executives at Jardine Fleming after the Hong Kong firm was fined £700,000 by a City watchdog last month.

Flemings, which has a 50 per cent stake in Jardine Fleming, Hong Kong's oldest established merchant bank, said yesterday that James Bruce, currently head of global capital markets in London, was returning to Hong Kong to join the Jardine Fleming board. He will also sit on a new ten-strong supervisory board which will comprise four Robert Fleming directors including John Manser, chief executive, four Jardine

Matheson executives including Alasdair Morrison, chairman, and two from Jardine Fleming.

Robert Thomas, former chief executive of the Hong Kong operation and who had his authorisation to conduct investment business withdrawn after Colin Armstrong, a Jardine Fleming trader, was alleged to have diverted profits from market deals into a personal account, is to retire.

So too is Alan Smith, chairman of Jardine Fleming. Between them the two men, both in their fifties, have worked at Flemings for more than 50 years and are expected to receive undisclosed lump sum payments on retirement.

England's farmers harvest record profit

By JON ASHWORTH

this year, according to a study by Deloitte & Touche, the accountant. But conditions are still better than in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when agriculture came under severe pressure.

Last year, average net farm income increased by 29 per cent to a record £363 a hectare. Deloitte & Touche found income ranged from £171 a hectare, for the most profitable farms, down to £104 a hectare.

Much of the gain was through

sharp improved prospects for wheat and other combinable crops, which account for 62 per cent of typical farm production in England. Grazing land, mainly dairy farming, accounts for about 14 per cent.

David Turner, a senior manager with Deloitte & Touche Agriculture at Cambridge, said world grain shortages and high oilseed prices had fuelled farming incomes. The pound's weakness had made British produce more attractive to overseas buyers.

The figures do not include the impact of the BSE scare, which struck late in March, close to the end of farmers' financial years. The dairy sector had a "pretty good" year, helped by higher milk prices, while sheep and pigs had shown an improvement.

Disappointing world grain harvests had boosted sales of wheat, the UK's biggest crop. China showed a huge upturn in demand.

Mr Turner said better farm management played a big part in the gains.

Invesco poised to take over US group

By ROBERT MILLER

INVEESCO, the international fund management house, will almost double its amount of money under management to \$93 billion if a deal to take over an American mutual fund manager goes ahead.

Invesco, which looks after \$8 billion of funds, yesterday confirmed that it is in talks with AIM Management Group, the thirteenth-largest US mutual fund manager company, with a view to a "possible business combination".

Billed as a merger, the talks are, in fact, about Invesco taking over AIM, which has more than three million shareholder accounts and 33 retail mutual funds. AIM, formerly known as American International Management, looks after £5 billion.

In the UK, Invesco manages some £7.3 billion and has a stable of 11 investment trusts and 22 unit trusts. It reported pre-tax profits of £32 million for the half year to June 30, up by 42 per cent.

Talks between Invesco and AIM, which has a UK money market fund run in London, have been going on for about two months and are expected to continue for some weeks before a deal is finalised.

Invesco shares eased 4.5p to 239p, in London yesterday.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	3933.2	(-2.6)
Yield	3.98%	
FTSE All share	1939.20	(-0.93)
Nikkei	21461.37	(+110.70)
New York	5893.26	(+15.70)
Dow Jones	689.52	(+3.69)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5.74%	(5.74%)
Long Bond	9.51%	(9.77%)
Yield	6.89%	(6.93%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month Interbank	5.74%	(5.74%)
Libor long gilt future (Dec)	108.10	(108.10)

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

New York	1.5615*	(1.5612)
London	1.5624	(1.5645)
DM	2.3774	(2.3627)
FF	6.0406	(7.9865)
SP	1.3651	(1.3650)
Yen	171.50*	(172.55)
£ Index	86.8	(86.4)

\$/£

£/Yen

London	1.5227*	(1.5170)
FF	5.1454*	(5.1285)
SP	1.2425	(1.2415)
Yen	110.44*	(110.47)
£ Index	97.3	(97.0)

Tokyo close Yen 110.40

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Dec) \$22.80 (\$22.65)

GOLD

London close \$380.15 (\$382.45)

* denotes midday trading price

Newton avoids Imro fight

By ROBERT MILLER

NEWTON, the fund management group looking after £10 billion, has backed down from confrontation with a City watchdog and agreed to pay an £80,000 fine for rule breaches.

Regionally, East Anglia saw the largest rise in earnings, at 5.4 per cent, and Greater London the smallest, at 3.2 per cent.

The figures provided trade unions with a new target for a minimum wage as Government figures lifted the level of a proposed pay floor to £4.10 an hour.

Unions will use the NES figure to push bargaining claims with companies and to increase pressure on the Labour Party to set a precise statutory national minimum wage figure.

Newton has reimbursed £63,247 in interest to clients with overdrafts. It must also pay costs of £34,000, and pre-tribunal costs that could easily exceed £100,000.

Newton said it felt it had been treated harshly, but decided not to go to a full tribunal in the wake of the Jardine Fleming and Morgan Grenfell affairs.

City Diary, page 27

There's something we'd like to raise with all our Clients.

Expectations.

Having built up our business – and our reputation – you might think we can afford to relax a little.

But no, if anything, it's just the opposite. In fact, the better the service we offer, the better the service people expect.

At the same time, our clients' needs have become more sophisticated, the market and shareholders more demanding.

Lloyds Bank Registrars has to ensure that each of those clients attracted by our reputation for speed, accuracy and value for money (over 450 companies with more than 14 million shareholders) carries on receiving a high standard of service.

We continue to make a substantial investment in our people and technology to move us further ahead of the field in providing a prompt and reliable service.

If you would like to know more about the Registrar that sets the

Swiss cut discount rate to low of 1%

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

SWITZERLAND'S central bank yesterday cut its discount rate by half a point to just 1 per cent, matching a historic low in what analysts described as a clear signal that it wanted the strong Swiss franc to weaken.

Traders pounced on the surprise news to sell the franc against the dollar and mark. Swiss money-market rates also fell and prices of short-term debt futures surged, but Swiss shares shrugged off the first discount rate cut since December.

A Swiss National Bank (SNB) statement said the move, which takes effect today, was in line with a recent decline in Swiss money-market rates. These rates have fallen below 2 per cent amid a generous flow of liquidity from the central bank.

The Swiss franc fell against the dollar and German mark on the news. The dollar was trading around SFr1.2521, up from 1.2425 before the news. The mark was up around 82.27 Swiss centimes per mark from about 81.90.

Analysts suggested that the SNB was moving away from its strict traditional adherence to money supply targets and instead turning its focus to the franc, whose strength has hamstrung the Swiss economy by having an adverse effect on crucial exports.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buy	Bank Sell
Australia \$	2.07	1.91
Austria Sch	1.54	1.54
Belgium Fr	51.89	47.99
Canada \$	2.34	2.08
Cyprus C	0.7388	0.701
Denmark Kr	1.95	1.83
Finland Mkr	7.67	7.02
France Fr	8.40	7.75
Germany Dm	2.32	2.39
Hong Kong \$	12.71	11.71
Iceland	115	95
Ireland	1.02	0.94
Iraqi D	5.34	4.59
Italy Lira	2472	2317
Japan Yen	188.50	170.50
Malta L	0.63	0.58
Netherlands Gld	2.94	2.574
New Zealand \$	2.37	2.15
Norway Kr	10.64	9.84
Portugal Esc	25.50	23.80
S Africa R	7.83	6.83
Spain Pta	205.50	192.50
Sweden Kr	10.95	10.15
Switzerland Fr	2.17	1.98
Turkey Lira	14,000	13,000
USA \$	1.658	1.528

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Rates will apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



Mike Handley, managing director, said the group was restoring much of its lost margin through lifting the selling price

Shake-up knocks McBride

BY FRASER NELSON

MCBRIDE, the own-label household products group, saw pre-tax profits fall to £20.7 million from £27.1 million for the year to June 30 after incurring restructuring costs of £6.3 million.

The company, which floated on the stock market last year, said it had resolved the severe production problems at its main plant in Barrow, Cumbria, after spending £1.9 million on redundancy measures and losing £4.4 million through other related costs.

Overall, sales advanced 10 per cent to £162 million, which left underlying profits 4 per cent higher, at £162 million. The surge in raw material prices, which sent its shares plummeting in January, reduced margins from 36 per cent to 33 per cent. Earnings dropped to 9.5p (20.9p). A final dividend of 4.45p, due on November 18, makes a total of 6.7p. Shares rose 13p to 139p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Asda refuses to sell Alka Seltzer tablets

ASDA, the supermarket group, has lost the latest of its battles over pricing of over-the-counter medicines. Bayer, the German drugs group and maker of Alka Seltzer, yesterday won an injunction that prevents Asda from selling the anti-indigestion tablets for less than the price set under the Resale Price Maintenance agreement. Bayer increased the price of its 30-tablet packs of Alka Seltzer by 10 per cent to £3.29, and also asked the supermarket group to sell the group's smaller packs, the contents of which it had reduced from 12 to 10 tablets.

Asda has now withdrawn all 30-tablet packs from its 207 stores. "We do not believe a price increase of five times the rate of inflation can be justified. We would rather not stock the product than pass on such a price rise to our customers," said Nick Cooper, corporate lawyer for Asda. Asda's campaign against price maintenance began a year ago, when it cut the price of branded vitamins. The Office of Fair Trading's report on resale price maintenance is due within weeks, and Asda is hoping that it will recommend a review of the pricing structure for over-the-counter medicines.

Yule Catto confident

YULE CATTO, the speciality chemicals and building products company, said a record year was again in prospect after reporting a rise in pre-tax profits to £17.4 million from £15.96 million in the six months to June 30. Earnings rose to 10.6p a share from 9.5p and the interim dividend is lifted to 3.6p a share from 3.2p. The shares fell 4.2p to 393p. Profits from chemicals rose to £16.5 million from £15 million, but building products slipped to £2.8 million from £2.9 million.

Northern Rock deal

GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE is to provide general insurance products to the 190,000 customers of the Northern Rock Building Society in a partnership deal announced yesterday. The new service will be launched on January 1 and premium income in the first year of operation is expected to total around £65 million. Other new products would be developed in the future, Guardian said. Northern Rock has already announced its intention to demutualise and become a bank.

Irish output increases

INDUSTRIAL production in the Irish Republic rose by a seasonally adjusted 5.4 per cent in May after a 1 per cent drop in April, according to figures released yesterday by the Central Statistics Office in Dublin. Seasonally adjusted figures for the three months to May 31 show a decrease of just under 1 per cent from the three months to February 29. On a year-on-year basis, output rose by almost 10 per cent. The pharmaceutical and electrical engineering sectors recorded the biggest annual increases, of 5.3 per cent and 2.4 per cent, respectively.

World Bank savings

THE World Bank said in its annual report yesterday that it had cut its administrative budget by 3.6 per cent in the current financial year. The report, published just before next week's annual meetings of the Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington, said that disbursements from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development were up \$700 million to \$13.37 billion and those from the International Development Association were up \$181 million to \$5.88 billion. *Debt triumph, page 27*

Balance of payments surplus calms worries over trade gap

BY OLIVER AUGUST

BRITAIN'S foreign trade gap has widened but economists say that worries about a trade shortfall are placated by the surplus in the balance of payments.

In July, the gap grew from £1 billion to £1.2 billion, while the August trade deficit in goods with non-EU countries improved from £700 million to £500 million, the Office

for National Statistics said yesterday. David Smith, UK economist at Williams de Broe, said: "As long as the big surplus on investment income from abroad continues there will no real trade deficit worries."

These deviations were attributed to forecasting difficulties. Marian Bell, Treasury economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland, said: "The global trade balance is very cyclical

and not hugely significant, and has been largely overshadowed by the recent current account surplus."

The trade figures also showed a big rise in car exports. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, commented that this increase clearly demonstrated the competitive ness of the British car industry. "They show that its

expertise, innovation and efficiency are recognised by the rest of the world. In July we exported cars worth £803 million, an increase of more than 50 per cent over last year."

But Margaret Beckett, Labour's Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, said that the trade figures exploded the Conservative claim that Britain was the "enterprise centre of Europe". They showed a continuing and substantial deficit both in trade with Europe, £2.9 billion in the first seven months of 1996, and with the world as a whole, £8.5 billion so far this year.

Earlier this month the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders had confirmed that the increase in car production in the United Kingdom had been export-led. Mr Lang insisted, "I am sure that this improvement will be sustained by events like the launch on to the market of the Jaguar XK8 next month," he said.

EU rejects social chapter fears

BY PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRITAIN'S social chapter opt-out threatens jobs and weakens competitiveness. The European Commission said yesterday in a strong defence of Europe's employment legislation which denied the social chapter was a "late 20th century version of the Black Death" for business.

Padraig Flynn, EU Social Affairs Commissioner, made a plea to a conference organised by City law firm Beachcroft Stanley which was chaired by David

which ministers immediately rejected. In a speech in London, Mr Flynn attacked the way the social chapter "is being used to spread fear and loathing of the European Union." He denied that the social chapter was a "socialist Darth Vader intent on the destruction of employers".

Mr Flynn, speaking at a conference organised by City law firm Beachcroft Stanley which was chaired by David

Hunt, the Conservatives' former Employment Secretary, said the social chapter was merely a device to allow Europe to make progress on social legislation where there was strong support for it, "not a sinister plan to terminate businesses". He said: "The social chapter is not the late 20th century version of the Black Death. It is merely a process, and an inclusive and productive process at that. It takes us forward, not backwards."

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Mr Flynn, speaking at a conference organised by City law firm Beachcroft Stanley which was chaired by David

Hunt, the Conservatives' former Employment Secretary, said

Decision time over South West Slowdown looms in the MBO market National Power's strange change of heart

GERALD HOLTHAM of the Institute for Public Policy Research, which is to new Labour what the Fabian Society was to the old, has had a bright idea. To stop being so unpopular, privatised water groups should turn themselves into mutuals by using "windfall profits" to buy back their shares.

Rewriting history is always fun. There was, indeed, a case for that sort of structure at privatisation. But if risk-bearing shares were eliminated now, regulation would have to transfer the risk to customers, so losing any incentive for companies to improve their efficiency. As things stand, shareholders own the companies and Ian Byatt, the regulator, must look after the customers. He now has a unique opportunity to help those in Devon and Cornwall, whose water supplies is easily the most unpopular of the lot. And he can thank that exorcism of capitalism, the takeover bid.

South West Water has received two putative bids. The obligatory Monopolies and Mergers Commission reports on both should be thudding onto Ian Lang's desk at the Department of Trade and Industry today. The MMC usually says bids are against the public interest unless the bidder offers Mr Byatt enough price cuts to offset the loss of one of the ten monopolies whose differing

performance gives him ammunition to fire at laggards. In this case, the downside for regulator and consumer is as bad as it could be. Wessex Water is South West's neighbour, and Mr Byatt thinks Severn Trent may already be too big for anyone's good.

Both the MMC and Mr Byatt may have been tempted to blackball Severn Trent or to set it stiffer hurdles than Wessex. But the case for spreading the load on South West customers is strong: the fate of government could rest on their votes next spring. They, too, should hope for competition between bidders.

In theory, Mr Byatt holds all the cards. In practice, it is hard to deny customers any price cuts offered, so bids become a foregone conclusion and the benefits to customers depend on negotiating skills. In the North-East, Lyonnaise des Eaux won on points. In the South West, it is a political necessity that customers should really feel the difference. If the MMC has not set a tough enough test, Mr Lang should do so. He should insist that customers' measurable gain as much as shareholders. A simple

test would be to veto any bid unless the net present value of price cuts until 2005 tops the bid premium to SWW investors.

SWW is already valued at about £230 million more than before bid rumours started, though its shares would in any case have risen as management performance improved. On that basis, customers could expect immediate price cuts of at least 16 per cent a year. If Wessex or Severn Trent bid more, as they would need to, they would automatically have to offer bigger price cuts to match. For once, customers' and investors' interests would indeed be mutual.

Too good to last?

IT is with great sadness that we announce the death of the management buyout at the age of 15. After a difficult childhood, friends and relatives had hoped for a more peaceful adolescence, but the past two years of frantic over-indulgence took their toll. No flowers by request.

Or perhaps not, depending on

want for your business to current stock market multiples, and these are undeniably high.

KPMG also says many of the deals companies were desperate to close before any election are done, and it is certainly clear that mergers and acquisitions activity is low — just look at how few takeover battles are currently running. Furthermore, cash balances are high, so companies have no great need to hove off businesses to reduce debt.

Other venture capitalists are less sure, though. 3i, the biggest of the lot, detects no discernible slackening of the rate of deals walking through its doors. Ditto Schroder Ventures. Gordon Bonnyman, at Charterhouse Development Capital, thinks likewise, but he points out that everything runs in cycles, and the MBO boom will one day have to turn down. This looks about right, and the above reasons suggest now is the time.

The market last overheated in 1989 because financiers were paying silly prices and putting in too much debt as against equity. Inevitably, economic slowdown

After two extremely good years, a degree of renewed caution is understandable. But what fun while it lasted.

Alternating currents

NATIONAL POWER is in a cheerful mood these days. Investors are hearing of a bright future of ambitious overseas expansion and a healthy 20 to 25 per cent of the UK's generation output by the year 2000.

But wait. Is this not the same National Power that told the Monopolies and Mergers Commission that it expected to lose market share to the new independent generators, leaving it with just 13.9 per cent to 20.5 per cent of the market? It seems those figures, formally laid before the competition authorities, have taken a little revision since the company was telling the world how taking over Southern Electric, a regional electricity company, would not consolidate the industry to an unacceptable level. The story then was that the two generators were at the mercy

of hordes of new generators queuing up to take advantage of weak gas prices and start pumping out cheap power. Goodness. National Power said, brushing away a tear, there might one day be hardly be anything left of the once-massive monolith.

One veto by Ian Lang later and market expectations are quite different. Why suddenly so cheerful? The firming of the gas price, a spokesman explains. We just don't see as many new generators keen to enter the fray as we did then. But hang on. The spot price of gas may have moved a little but long-term contracts have hardly budged. Still, the new market share expectations might just scare off one or two of those new entrants and bolster a weak share price...

Crossed wires

IF imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, Cable and Wireless must have been delighted by BT's French connection. C&W has been written off by BT among others as an investment trust because it tends to hold minority investments around the world. Now BT has adopted the same formula, with a 25 per cent stake in the French deal and, with the exception of Spain, a minority holding in every new foreign venture. Maybe C&W has it right after all.

Bad weather hits profits at Redland

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

REDLAND, the building materials group, yesterday blamed bad weather for a slump in its profits.

A severe winter had swept across its European operations, exacerbating already difficult market conditions, Redland said.

The company said that it was to cut 250 jobs in France after trade in aggregates proved worse than expected. Aggregates in France have come under additional pressure as the country reduces public spending on infrastructure projects in order to meet the Maastricht criteria for European Monetary Union.

Redland followed a series of building sector companies in declaring sharp falls in profits when it reported a 42 per cent slide in pre-tax profits to £95.5 million, for its first half.

The interim dividend, due on December 16, is held at 5.5p.

Redland threw a more optimistic light on its figures than some construction companies by predicting improvement later in the year as a higher level of cost savings kick in.

Redland's European tiling operations took the brunt of a downturn in demand from the tough winter, with operating

profits sliding to £69 million, from £119.4 million. Weather delays to building work worsened already poor demand in Germany and France.

Redland said that it was hopeful of recovery in Germany. There, it is largely exposed to the housing market through its roofing work and it is confident of increased activity in housing. It said that housing permits, an indicator of short-term prospects, rose by 3 per cent in the main market area for pitched roofing. Redland also expects cost savings of £10 million in its German businesses in the full year.

In the UK, low spending on roadbuilding and other infrastructure projects affected aggregates, with profits down to £27.5 million, from £35 million. However, Redland said that improving prices helped to offset a fall in volumes.

In France, where the 250 jobs will be lost, Redland expects annual cost savings of about £6 million from restructuring to come through by 1997.

Savings from restructuring already in train throughout the group are expected to deliver up to £30 million.

Tempus, page 26

AEA Technology in strong market debut

BY CLARE STEWART

SHARES of AEA Technology achieved a strong performance on their first day's trading. The shares, offered at 280p, leapt ahead in early trading and closed at 323½p. More than 20 million shares changed hands.

The rise took the company's market value to £258 million from £224 million.

AEA was formerly the research and advisory division

of the state-owned Atomic Energy Authority. About 3,300 of AEA Technology's staff were subscribed for shares.

The offer to private investors was seven times oversubscribed. Most received a fifth of the shares applied for.

Shares in Brumate Mond, the commodity chemicals group, made a less-successful debut. Offered at 175p, they closed at 170½p after touching 179p.

THE FLEMING INTERNATIONAL HIGH INCOME INVESTMENT TRUST PLC

Notice is hereby given that the register of members will be closed from close of business on 1st October 1996

By order of the board,

Fleming Investment Trust Management Limited
(Secretary)

Registered Office: 25 Copthall Avenue, London EC2R 7DR

Dated: 27th September 1996

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MICHAEL CLARK

Plan for 'mad cow' test beefs up research group

SHARES of Electrophoresis International are expected to open sharply higher when trading resumes this morning after the group announced plans last night to develop a process that can identify 'mad cow' disease in humans.

The group was forced to issue the statement after this week's disclosures by Professor Michael Harrington and his team in the US. Electrophoresis has acquired a licence from the National Institute of Health in the US to commercialise a patent for the process discovered by Professor Harrington.

It is already able to test patients exhibiting symptoms of the disease. Brokers say that the new process can be developed for commercial use and it would provide a significant boost to the group's long-term prospects. The announcement came too late to affect the shares, which closed unchanged at 65p.

The rest of the equity market traded in narrow limits for much of the day, unable to build on Wednesday's advances. After reversing an earlier 6.5-point lead, the FTSE 100 index closed 2.5 down at 3,933.2. A total of 635 million shares were traded.

Zeneca booted over, finishing 7.5p lower at 15.47 as Bayer, the German pharmaceutical group, formally denied that it planned to bid for the company.

P&O rose 8p to 603p as BZW added its weight to recent buy recommendations from Panmure Gordon and UBS. But BAT Industries lost 7.5p at 481p ahead of a court ruling in the US.

Dixons fell 9p to 523.5p as Sun Life Group announced it had sold almost 750,000 shares, reducing its holding to 20.98 million shares, or 4.99 per cent. This week, Mark Souhami exercised options on 102,620 shares at 306p and 330p which he later sold in the market at 546p.

Great Universal Stores continued to benefit from a buy recommendation from ABIN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker, with a rise of 10.5p at 646p. But there were setbacks for Kingfisher, down 10p to 637.5p, Next, 3.5p to 561p, and Oliver Group, 5.5p to 32p. House of Fraser marked time at 157p ahead of figures next week expected to reveal further losses. Kwik Save continued to reel from this week's bearish comments from Cred-



Stanley Kalms, chairman of Dixons, which dipped 9p

it Lyonnais Laing, the broker, with the price dropping a further 20p to 312.5p for a two-day deficit of 54p. Now NatWest Securities and ABIN Amro Hoare Govett have joined in on the act. NatWest has called for store closures and says the dividend should be cut.

Standard Chartered fell 16p to 690p as investors began

32.5p, a premium of 43.5p.

It was a different story for Brauner Mond, the subject of a buyout from ICI in 1991, with the shares failing to hold on to an early premium. Placed at 175p, the shares soon established a 4.5p premium before sliding back on lack of follow-through by investors. They closed at 170.5p, a discount of 4.5p. Brokers said that with a

poor set of figures due out from ICI, up 5.5p at 826p, investors were reluctant to give a presentation to brokers in the City.

Courtoulds was carried 13.5p higher to 473.5p on claims that the shares were a chart buy. Nomura, the Japanese securities house, was said to be in the bidding.

BT clawed back some of Wednesday's fall with a rise of 3p at 365.5p after confirming

switching into HSBC, 24p lighter at 1202p. Struggling BTR was steady at 271p after giving a presentation to brokers in the City.

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plans to pay £1.1 billion for a 25 per cent stake in Cegedim, the new French telecoms company controlled by Générale des Eaux.

Guinness, the leading brewer, has increased its market share and raised pre-tax profits at the halfway stage by £17 million to £357 million. But profits from spirits were again down. The figures received a lukewarm reception and the shares finished 6p cheaper at 448.5p.

Better than expected first-half figures from Redland were rewarded with a rise of 2.5p at 447p. Even so profits were down from £165.2 million to £95 million although most market estimates had been pitched at around the 386p mark.

The market shrugged off the downturn in full-year profits at Beazer Homes with the price adding 3.5p at 187p after evidence of a rise in house prices.

Barratt Developments,

which reported earlier this week, slipped 2.5p to 272p.

Seaford celebrated a return to the black with a rise of 1.5p to 103p.

Interim figures from Trinity Holdings were in line with expectations, but continuing problems with its Malaysian bus operation left the shares 56p down at 275p.

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THE
TIMES
CITY
DIARY

Goode idea for
last-minute gift

A CHARMING tale from the old trading floor at the London Stock Exchange where a guest at the tenth anniversary party to celebrate the Big Bang paid over the odds for his wife's birthday present.

It wasn't until the gentleman in question arrived at the "themed" reception that he realised Wednesday was in fact his wife's birthday. To escape the dog house, he bid £800 for the last two remaining sets of five commemorative Big Bang plates in gold leaf, commissioned from Mrs Goode in 1986. Lucky her.

Make Imroads

NEWTON, having suffered the ignominy of being hauled before the bar and fined £85,000 for breaking City rules, has taken precautionary measures to ensure that it does not happen again. The fund manager now boasts a compliance department of seven people of whom two are former officials of Imro, the watchdog-turned-rottweiler headed by Philip Thorpe that handed out the fine in the first place.

Never too old

AFTER the news that Peter Stringfellow is planning a £60 million flotation of his night-club chain to fund the nationwide expansion of his topless dancing show, the 55-year-old swinger is hosting a briefing on behalf of IFA Promotions. "Saving Smarter for a Rave Retirement", set up by the group that markets independent financial advice, boasts *Sale of the Century* star Nicholas Parsons as guest speaker. A gang of oldies has been hired from an acting agency to add to the atmosphere at the night-club: the original plan was to invite a nearby old folks home.



"Cash deal, 20% off or I give the VAT a tinkle — know what I mean?"

JOAN COLLINS was in the City yesterday, distracting diners from their foal at Gladwin's restaurant in Minster Court. Her High-ness fed on asparagus and gravad lax, while owner Peter Gladwin rushed around her with vegetables from his garden in Nutbourne and his best Nutbourne Manor Sussex Reserve 1995. Before long, the luvvies were swapping books: *The Second Act*, *Joan's autobiography*, and *Party Ingredients*, *Feather's cookbook*.

Kiss to tell

A COUP for *The Economist*. It has hired Henry Kissinger for £400,000 to make his first advertisement for the UK. The former US Secretary of State and Nobel Peace Prize winner will make his British screen acting debut in a 30-second slot in the middle of Monday's *News At Ten*. The man who was caught peering down the cleavage of Diana, Princess of Wales, earlier this year, was chosen to head the eight-week campaign. David Abbott, who is the chairman and creative director of the British agency that made the commercial, gushes: "Kissinger was chosen for his daunting intelligence."

MORAG PRESTON

ECONOMIC VIEW



ANATOLE KALETSKY

IMF delivers a spectacular recantation of monetarism

In two sentences of 'World Economic Outlook', the Fund threw away the core of the Friedman doctrine

IS economics a rational, empirical discipline, akin to the natural sciences, though not, of course, their equal? Or is it an ideology, relying for its influence not on reason or experience but on self-interest and faith? The annual meeting of finance ministers and central bankers at the International Monetary Fund in Washington is often marked by currency speculation, but rarely inspires philosophical speculation. And this week there has, indeed, been plenty for the financial speculators to get stuck into — for example, the IMF's unusually explicit call for further reductions in German interest rates and a bigger depreciation of the German mark. But looking beyond the day-to-day gyrations of the markets, there is a far more interesting — in fact, truly historic — philosophical dimension to this year's Washington jamboree. This is revealed in the *World Economic Outlook* (WEO) prepared by the IMF staff.

Concealed in the dry, technical prose of this year's WEO are some philosophical assertions whose importance for economic policies in the years ahead dwarfs the significance of the IMF's comments about short-term prospects for the world economy. In fact, this WEO amounts to a spectacular recantation of the monetarist conventional wisdom that has governed economic policymaking outside America for ten to 20 years, and which — in my view — is largely responsible for Europe's crisis of mass unemployment.

Specifically, the IMF now makes the following assertions, directly rejecting all of the fundamental axioms of monetarism, as stated in Milton Friedman's notorious presidential lecture to the American Economic Association, restated even more dogmatically by Nigel Lawson in his 1985 Mais Lecture and parroted by every British Chancellor (and Shadow Chancellor). □ The IMF no longer believes that monetary policy must be directed solely at maintaining low inflation. At the same time as limiting inflation, monetary policy must also try to stabilise output and minimise cyclical unemployment. "The proper conduct of monetary policy does not consist only of raising short-term interest rates to forestall a potential rise in inflationary pressures. Overambition in smoothing output, without regard to inflationary risks, is counterproductive. But overambition in reducing inflation too rapidly also has unwarranted adverse consequences for output and employment."

□ The IMF now rejects the idea at the heart of monetarism — that inflation and nominal national income are somehow automatically determined by the growth of the money supply. Changes in the money supply do not directly affect prices or nominal spending, it says. Rather, interest rates work through a number of channels to affect real economic activity and employment, and thereby indirectly affect inflation: asset values, exchange rates and bank lending practices. This long discussion does not even mention the stable demand to hold money balances, which was the bedrock of the Friedman theory. This leads to the IMF's next recantation.

□ The IMF also formally rejects monetary targets. "The lesson that emerges from the experience with monetary targeting is that monetary aggregates do not directly affect prices or nominal spending, it says. Rather, interest rates work through a number of channels to affect real economic activity and employment. It is only by suppressing or stimulating employment and real economic activity that monetary policy indirectly affects inflation."

For a generation of economists brought up on the Nobel-prize-winning claptrap of monetarism and rational expectations, the assertion that monetary policy acts mainly on employment



Hans Tietmeyer: wedded to talismanic M3 target



Michael Camdessus: endorsed anti-Bundesbank views

and only indirectly on inflation, is as heretical as Galileo's assertion that the Earth goes round the Sun. Let me quote from the WEO: "A higher interest rate prompts a reduction in current expenditure on investment goods and probably on consumption, including housing and durables, and thereby lowers domestic demand. The associated reduction in activity increases excess capacity and unemployment, which, in turn, put downward pressure on inflation."

After throwing away the core of monetarism with these two sentences, the WEO goes on to examine other channels through which monetary policy can influence activity and employment, and thereby indirectly affect inflation: asset values, exchange rates and bank lending practices. This long discussion does not even mention the stable demand to hold money balances, which was the bedrock of the Friedman theory. This leads to the IMF's next recantation.

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With Hans Tietmeyer, the Bundesbank president, now pressing for a European-wide monetary target, modelled on its own talismanic target

for German M3 — and known to be strongly against British-style inflation targets — the IMF's views are of much more than theoretical interest. The IMF's clear disdain for the Bundesbank approach, and apparent preference for inflation targets, does not just represent the best judgment of the IMF's staff economists. It also seems to reflect the views of Michel Camdessus, the Fund's managing director, and a close ally of the French Government and the Bank of France.

Judging by these comments, the battle over the conduct of monetary policy by the European Central Bank after EMU is only just beginning. Fortunately for Europe a victory for the Bundesbank's approach is by no means assured.

□ Finally, the IMF is having second thoughts about the most damaging and persistent theoretical legacy of the monetarist era. This is Friedman's doctrine of the non-accelerating rate of unemployment (NAIRU). Friedman asserted that in any economy there is one level of unemployment with a very peculiar property: if monetary policy is loosened so that unemployment falls below this level, ever-accelerating inflation will result. Although nobody has ever been able to discover the NAIRU for any particular country, economists and policymakers have taken its existence as an article of faith. Worse, they have used it to justify the continuation of mass joblessness.

In the past year this pernicious doctrine has been put to the test by a brave central banker, Alan Greenspan of the Fed. Although most economists in America "estimated" that the NAIRU was somewhere above the 6 per cent range, Mr Greenspan has repeatedly refused to tighten monetary policy as unemployment fell to its present 5.1 per cent. This week he confounded the analysts yet again by refusing to raise interest rates — and, contrary to some press reports, Michael Mussa, the IMF's chief economist, endorsed this decision.

Mr Mussa agreed that the Fed was conducting an experiment to discover how far, and how fast, the economy can expand before inflation is triggered. Such an experiment is, indeed, the only rational way to discover what the NAIRU is, or whether it exists. But what is the relevance for the rest of the world? The IMF states in the WEO that NAIRU for continental Europe is between 8 and 9 per cent. But Mr Mussa conceded there was no definitive evidence for this assertion. As in America, the only way to discover how far unemployment can fall without triggering inflation will be to allow it to go on falling. Why, then, did the IMF not say this?

This is how Mr Mussa replied: "The NAIRU is a bit like an economist's unicorn — a mythical beast we've never met head-on and perhaps wouldn't want to. The sustainable rate of unemployment in Europe could well be below 9 or 8 per cent. When we get to that point let's find out. But it would be a mistake to find out too fast by gunning the European economy for a year or two of very rapid growth. Once we get unemployment down to 9 per cent, the question about an experiment like the Fed's can be raised."

Mr Mussa may be too cautious. But at least he is talking the rational language of learning from empirical results. That is a giant step forward.

More importantly, this new non-dogmatic thinking could eventually help the jobless of Europe — as it has already helped America's unemployed.

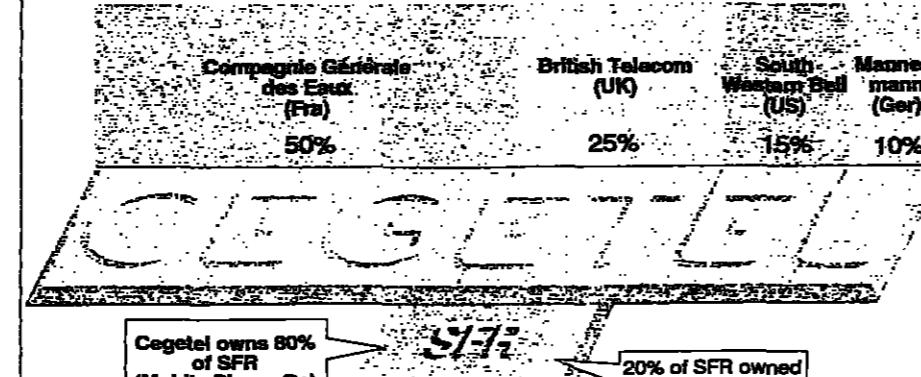
□ This new non-dogmatic thinking could eventually help the jobless of Europe.



Alan Greenspan: conducting brave Fed experiment

BT selects a far from easy number

PROPOSED CORPORATE STRUCTURE



Continent, their chances of success are far from assured. Years may pass before any of their alliances makes a profit: the investment costs could be enormous, and the dominant operators will fight like tigers to avoid losing market share. BT is the perfect example. Fourteen years after privatisation, it is the main operator in almost every business category in spite of the presence of 150 competitors of various shapes and forms. BT's French deal is ambitious. BT and its partners

have some 20% of the French telecoms market. To get things moving, it paid £1.1 billion for a 25 per cent stake in a new company called Cegedel. Cegedel's other owners are Générale des Eaux (50 per cent), South Western Bell, the regional US phone company (15 per cent) and Mannesmann, the German industrial and telecoms group (10 per cent). Cegedel's main asset is a 77 per cent holding in SFR, France's second largest mobile phone company, which is growing rapidly. It has some

700,000 customers and claims to be recruiting 40 per cent of all new subscribers. Cegedel's work has only just begun. It has to secure a full telecoms licence from the Government and, because it does not have its own terrestrial network, needs to negotiate an interconnection agreement with France Telecom. On its own, BT is bidding for the telecoms business of SNCF, the state-controlled train operator. If it wins, BT probably would transfer the SNCF division to Cegedel. Since SNCF's

cables go everywhere the trains go, this would give Cegedel an instant national telecoms network.

Some analysts think that BT's European plans are overly ambitious. They note that Mercury's experience in Britain proves that competing on price alone is not the route to success. BT and its partners will have to compete on quality of service and products. France Telecom is fairly well regarded for its modern network, range of services and competitive prices.

Germany presents a different problem. Viasat Interkom, BT's telecoms partnership with Viasat, the German utility, might have trouble negotiating a favourable interconnection agreement with Deutsche Telekom. The Government knows that an agreement that gives competitors inexpensive access to Telekom's network would stimulate competition, but too much competition might trigger more redundancies. BT is in a bind. Competition is slowing its growth at home but continental Europe will not generate growth as quickly as it hopes.

ERIC REGULY

Minor success in the battle to end poverty

British pragmatism has triumphed on Third World debt, says Janet Bush

Two years of unedifying haggling later, we should see an international agreement on debt relief for some of the world's poorest countries in the next few days. The HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Country Debt Initiative) is likely to be nodded through at next week's International Monetary Fund and World Bank annual meetings.

This is a triumph for the Treasury which has campaigned tirelessly on the issue. British pragmatism has persuaded the IMF (for the first time in its 50 years) that there is a debt problem which has meant that economic progress in many countries is still-born.

And, putting any moral discussions to one side, Britain has successfully argued that there is no point in pursuing poor nations to pay off their debt when there is patently no prospect of them being able to do so. But the agreement is only a qualified triumph. Kenneth Clarke might have saved the word "pragmatic" for the protracted negotiations of rich country creditors such as Germany instead of his Eurosceptic colleagues at home. The amount of money involved and the number of countries likely to be eligible — about 20, mostly in Africa — is small, the conditions penal.

The largest estimate by IMF and World Bank staff of the total cost of debt relief — divided between the multilateral institutions and Paris Club creditors — is \$1.7 billion. As Oxfam points out in a study published yesterday, this is less than the amount spent by Walt Disney in establishing its Euro Disney theme park. It is worth remembering what the IMF's Kampala office said in June: "In reviewing the outcome for the present fiscal year, the mission has found that Uganda's economic and financial performance has again been outstanding."

Uganda's repayments on external debt will amount to \$184 million in 1996-97, just over \$9 for every man, woman and child. Under the HIPC initiative, Oxfam calculates that some \$240 million would be saved in real terms over the next three years. This is four times what the Ugandan Government currently spends on primary education and six times the level of spending on primary healthcare.

Oxfam reckons that the savings over the next three years would simultaneously provide basic healthcare for two million people, full immunisation for one million children, access to clean water for a million, a full set of basic books and teaching materials for two million primary schoolchildren and latrines for one million.

So despite HIPC's manifest shortcomings, it should not be written off as a useless effort because it will make some difference. And there are already signs emerging of greater flexibility and generosity. Some reports suggest that Norway may break ranks in the Paris Club and commit unilaterally to 90 per cent relief.

There is talk that Uganda may get some debt relief as early as next

month, if only in a public relations exercise to show that the initiative means something. Britain should now start pushing its international partners to exploit such developments and build swiftly on what has already been achieved.

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ERIC REGULY

Dip in UK oil and gas output

UK OIL and gas production fell to a 12-month low in August, although strengthening oil prices helped to offset the full impact.

The Royal Bank of Scotland's monthly oil and gas index said oil output fell 6.9 per cent in August because of scheduled maintenance work to 2.3 million barrels per day (bpd), 5.8 per cent lower than in August 1995.

However, the average price of Brent crude rose to \$20.51 in August, its second-highest of the year, 4.8 per cent up on July and 27.6 per cent up on August 1995. Daily oil revenues fell 2.2 per cent to \$30.9 million, but were nearly 22 per cent higher than a year ago.

Gas production fell for the sixth successive month. Output was down 3.4 per cent on July although 26.9 per cent higher than in August last year.

Oil prices rose steeply in September on renewed conflict between Iraq and America with Brent crude at \$23.15 yesterday.

Fyffes plans Europe drive

FYFFES, the fresh-food company based in the Irish Republic which controls one-fifth of the EU banana market, said yesterday it would use the cash from the disposal of a major Central American operation to expand in Europe.

The company sold its 50 per cent stake in Banana Trading Corporation to a Dole Food Company subsidiary for \$26.3 million.

The corporation, which owns a Guatemalan banana farming business and farm assets in Honduras, was the main supplier for Fyffes' US operation. Last year the operation, with only a 2.5 per cent market share, made a loss of about £11 million.

Carl McCann, Fyffes' deputy chairman, said: "The cash generated will be used to continue the group's programme of European expansion."

Fyffes had agreed shipping arrangements with Dole, for transporting bananas, which it said would give both companies significant economies of scale.

Ultra aiming to raise £27.4m in market flotation

BY FRASER NELSON

ULTRA Electronic Holdings, which makes electrical instruments for aircraft, is seeking a stock market flotation via a share placing that values the company at £162.5 million.

Julian Blogh, chief executive, and Ian Yeoman, finance director, led a management team that bought the company for £40 million three years ago, buying seven businesses from the TI Group.

The bid was backed by Philpott Ventures and a consortium of banks led by the Bank of Scotland.

Mr Blogh said that he had managed to secure the good price from the uncertainty surrounding the defence sector in the aftermath of the Gulf War and the end of the Cold War.

The company will raise

£27.4 million from the flotation, £19.6 million of which will be used to redeem the preference shares and £7.8 million will be put towards a share buyback.

In 1996 it is expected to generate profits of £14.5 million (£10.2 million) before tax and exceptional, on sales of £120 million (£97.3 million).

Three-quarters of its sales come from the military sector, and nearly all are from the UK. It plans to increase its modest presence in the US, where it made its first acquisition in July. Its order book is worth £84 million.

Schroders has placed 34.4 million shares with institutions at 250p each. The issue was 2½ times subscribed.

Tempus, page 26



TONY WHITE

Ultra hopeful: Julian Blogh, right, and Ian Yeoman after the flotation announcement

Beazer optimistic after strong performance in second half

BY OLIVER AUGUST

BEAZER HOMES, the building group, suffered a decline in pre-tax profits — to £46.5 million from £55.7 million — in the year to June 30, in spite of a marked improvement in fortunes in the second half.

Although earnings fell to 11.75p a share, from 13.95p, the company has increased the total dividend to 6p, from 5.85p, with a final payment of 4p. The shares rose 3½p to close at 18.75p.

Victor Benjamin, chairman, said that the group had achieved one of its highest levels of completions and that house reservations in the current financial year were already up one-third on 1995. "In a challenging year the group was able to make major strides in development, broadening its approach to the market," he said.

The group's average selling price for a home rose by 3 per cent in the year, to £63,300, reflecting a minor change to the product mix and a lower level of social housing. Oper-

ating profits recovered to finish 13 per cent lower year-on-year, after dipping by 22 per cent in the first six months.

In a statement on its business outlook, the group said: "Against a backdrop of increasing consumer confidence

it went on: "Beyond the

election, the underlying strength of the market will enable the group to continue its progress, driven by its clarity of organisation."

The group's land bank was 20,167 plots by the year-end, an increase of almost 2,000, with

an average value of £12,900 per plot. Strategic land holdings were also strengthened with the group holding 3,300 acres of land without planning status. A further 4,200 acres are held under option agreements, which the group is promoting through a planning system.

Beazer is currently expecting that material suppliers will raise prices in view of the upturn in the construction sector. To keep such cost increases under control the group is including cost inflation within its land acquisition appraisals, which should help to protect margins.

The composition of the board changed during the year, with Andrew Calvert being appointed financial director after David Smith moved to an operational role.

The final dividend will be paid on November 18 to shareholders listed in the register on October 15.

Tempus, page 26

Oliver Group trips again



Cassidy: market turbulence

DIFFICULT market conditions continued to trip up Oliver Group, the shoe retailer, in its first half (Clare Stewart writes).

Oliver reported an operating loss of £5.01 million, against 1995 losses of £2.3 million, and turnover down by nearly 15 per cent, to £294 million.

Denis Cassidy, chairman, said the results reflected flat consumer spending and "turmoil in the market from the collapse of the Facia group", which included Saxon and Hush Puppies shoe shops.

Oliver's sale of its former

headquarters site in Leicestershire helped the group to a pre-tax profit of £1.6 million, against a comparable loss of £3.1 million last year, and gearing fell from 104 per cent to 30 per cent. There is again no interim dividend.

Oliver Group has 310 shops under the Olivers, Timsons and Paris names. It is testing a number of new-style outlets, which Mr Cassidy says, have shown encouraging results.

A further operating loss is expected in the second half, and the shares fell 3½p, to 32p.

Lufthansa says BA is winning ticket war

BY OLIVER AUGUST

BRITISH AIRWAYS is winning the ticket war in Europe through aggressive price-cutting tactics, a rival airline said yesterday.

Lufthansa, the German carrier, said it had seen a sharp drop in market share and profits through being undercut by up to 45 per cent on

Herr Klein, a Lufthansa marketing executive, told a meeting of travel agents in Berlin: "Traffic is being siphoned off with cheap offers. The German market is being reduced to a connecting function for London, Paris, Amsterdam or Zurich."

In the first half of this year Lufthansa lost 250,000 customers and DMSO million (£22 million) in sales to discount offers in Germany from other European airlines. Herr Klein said. He named BA as an especially tough competitor, along with Air France.

The proposed BA/American Airlines alliance, being considered by the Office of Fair Trading, would heighten the ticket war. Herr Klein expected more competition from a BA telephone office in Bremen that would sell American Airlines tickets.

A BA spokesman said in response: "Lufthansa has a strong link with United Airlines as well as many smaller joint services around the world. Their criticism is not fair."

The shares closed at 77p.

Higgs & Hill gives warning of loss

BY FRASER NELSON

SHARES in Higgs & Hill, the construction and property group, yesterday dropped by 5p to a 12-month low of 76½p after the company gave warning that it would again incur a loss by the year end.

The company, which had been expected to make a full-year pre-tax profit of £1.5 million, said that it had already run up pre-tax losses of £8.4 million (£93,000 profit) at the halfway stage. George Duncan, chairman, blamed five loss-making contracts, all due to end by February. Analysts now expect year-end losses to total £2.5 million.

Mr Duncan said that the company had seen signs of recovery in the housing market, and remained confident that this would lift profits in its housing operations. It completed 200 houses in its first half, against 181 last time, but selling prices remained low.

Debt grew from £10.6 million to £15.4 million in the six months to June 30, taking gearing to 21 per cent. Mr Duncan said that borrowings had since returned to £10.6 million through disposal proceeds and settlement of a long dispute with Guy's Hospital.

Sales rose from £166 million to £174 million, but a sharp fall in profitability left losses of 3.6p a share (0.7p earnings). An interim dividend held at 1p is due on December 5.

The shares closed at 77p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Grampian to buy 75% stake in EWM

GRAMPIAN HOLDINGS is paying £64.4 million for the 75 per cent stake in Edinburgh Woollen Mill it does not already own. It said EWM will form a new retail division to operate alongside its pharmaceutical and transport divisions. The acquisition will be part-funded via a rights issue of one new share for every five held at 125p each, raising £14.8 million.

EWM is a privately-owned company. The Stevenson family holds a 49 per cent interest; directors and employees hold 27 per cent and Grampian the balance. In the year to February 3 pre-tax profits were £8.6 million. Grampian also reported an 11 per cent rise pre-tax to £4.75 million for the six months to June 30. Earnings rose 7 per cent to 4.34p a share and the interim dividend is lifted 8 per cent to 1.95p a share.

Hunleigh sales curb

HUNLEIGH TECHNOLOGY, the medical products company, said sales were being restrained by current healthcare budgetary pressures in Britain and America, although long-term demand remained strong. In the six months to June 30 the company achieved an 11 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £7.96 million and earnings rose 10 per cent to 18.55p a share. The interim dividend is lifted to 4p a share from 3.5p. The shares fell 25p to 85.25p.

Renishaw profits surge

RENISHAW, manufacturer of precision metrology and inspection equipment, enjoyed a 64 per cent rise in pre-tax profits, to £15.9 million from £9.7 million, in the year to June 30. Turnover grew 23 per cent to £77.1 million, with strong growth in Britain, Italy and the Far East. Earnings were 26.26p a share compared with 16.04p previously, after adjustment for a 1-for-6 capitalisation issue. A final dividend of 5.76p a share makes a total of 8.65p (6.41p). The shares rose 8½p.

Trinity takes a tumble

SHARES of Trinity Holdings, the specialist vehicle manufacturer, fell 56p to 267½p yesterday after the company said it expected little growth in earnings per share this year. The company reported a 7 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £8.1 million for the six months to July 31. But earnings were unchanged at 9.7p a share on an enlarged share capital. The interim dividend rises 8 per cent to 2.8p. Turnover rose 25 per cent to £125.7 million, with strong growth in exports.

Sykes returns to black

ANDREWS SYKES, the air-conditioning, pumps and heating specialist, returned to profit in the half-year to June 30, earning £3.4 million before tax compared with losses of £1.5 million in the previous first half. Earnings were 14.2p a share, compared with losses of 16.0p. There is a dividend of 3.5p, the first interim dividend to be paid since 1992. The company said gearing was reduced to 16.6 per cent from 61.5 per cent. The shares were unchanged at 48.5p.

Hawtal Whiting ahead

HAWTAL WHITING HOLDINGS, the automotive services group, lifted pre-tax profits to £1.8 million from £845,000 in the six months to June 30. Activity was subdued in America, although this was likely to prove short-lived, the company said. Losses at the German subsidiary have been reduced. Earnings of 5.8p a share recovered from 0.8p previously but there is again no interim dividend. The shares were unchanged at 160p.

Expansion for DCC

DCC, the Irish industrial holding company, has expanded its food interests by acquiring 50 per cent of Millais Investments, which, in turn, has acquired Allied Foods, Ireland's leading independent distributor of chilled and frozen foods. The remaining 50 per cent of Millais is held by Allied management. The deal involves DCC realising its 30 per cent shareholding in Allied for £13.8 million and investing £6.25 million in Millais.

Clyde Blowers purchase

CYCLE BLOWERS, supplier of soot-blowing and materials-handling equipment, is acquiring Bergemann Germany and Bergemann USA from Germany's Deutsche Babcock Group for £17.1 million, to be part-funded by a £12 million two-for-three rights issue at 265p. Existing shares rose 1p, to 351p. Clyde estimates that the acquisitions have 28 per cent of the global soot-blowing equipment market. Clyde forecast pre-tax profits of £2.1 million for the year to August 31, up 48 per cent.

Bruntcliffe pegs payout

BRUNTCLIFFE AGGREGATES is holding the interim dividend at 0.4p a share after a fall in pre-tax profits to £1.6 million from £860,000 for the six months to June 30. Earnings fell to 0.5p a share from 1p. The company blamed poor weather and difficult markets and said the outlook was mixed, with operations in Scotland accounting for 90 per cent of UK turnover. In America, operations in Pennsylvania were performing well. The shares were unchanged at 22½p.

Harmony loses £5.3m

HARMONY PROPERTY GROUP had losses of £5.3 million before tax in the year to March 31 after a £3.6 million writedown of asset values. There was an exceptional charge of £460,000 against restructuring. Losses were 11.95 million in the previous year. The latest loss per share was 3.31p (1.23p loss). There was again no dividend. Harmony said none of the property portfolio met the board's criteria and there would be disposals. The shares were unchanged at 34p.

Radio group in the red

INDEPENDENT Radio Group, the commercial radio station operator with interests in Scotland, Manchester and Sussex, broadcasts to an adult population of 5.4 million with the acquisition of Central Scotland Radio. The company, which began business after raising £9.7 million by way of a placing in October 1995, yesterday reported a loss of £749,000 before tax for the period from incorporation to June 30. The loss per share was 7.5p. There is no dividend.

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construction industry, aims to tackle the widespread cash-in-hand practice where VAT is avoided, and also the practice of some building companies to charge VAT to customers and then not pass it on because they are not registered.

Philip Oppenheim, the Exchequer Secretary, said: "VAT fraud damages legitimate businesses and damages the image of the industry as a whole. This is why our joint initiative with the construction industry is so important."

Ian Deslandes, Director-General of the Building Employers Confederation, said: "We are aware that construction is a problem area in VAT compliance, and we are giving the Customs initiative our full support. The integrity of the building industry as a whole is at stake." Brian Flint, a director of the Federation of Master Builders, said: "His federation supports any move to minimise the shadow economy".

The scheme, part of a wider initiative by Customs and Excise to tackle the shadow economy, will run for two years in London, Manchester, Glasgow, Birmingham, Oxford and Colchester, operated by 50 VAT officers. It is thought the scheme may encourage businesses to shop other businesses since customers escaping VAT may be loath to complain.

دعا من الله

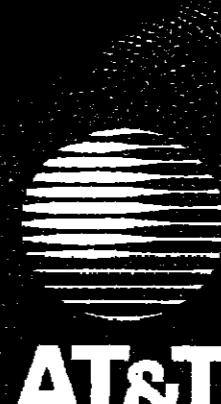
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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Equities mark time

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1996	High	Low	Price	Yield	%	PE	1996	High	Low	Price	Yield	%	PE	1996	High	Low	Price	Yield	%	PE
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES																				
245 115 Adlib Germany	320	26	66.17				267 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				323 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
62 463 Adlib (Int'l)	405	34	32.36				275 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				324 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
121 94 Adlib Germany	324	26	32.36				276 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				325 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
210 115 Adlib Germany A	324	26	32.36				277 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				326 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
211 115 Adlib Germany B	476	34	49.39				278 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				327 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
212 115 Adlib Germany C	476	34	49.39				279 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				328 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
213 115 Adlib Germany D	476	34	49.39				280 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				329 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
214 115 Adlib Germany E	476	34	49.39				281 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				330 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
215 115 Adlib Germany F	476	34	49.39				282 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				331 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
216 115 Adlib Germany G	476	34	49.39				283 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				332 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
217 115 Adlib Germany H	476	34	49.39				284 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				333 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
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219 115 Adlib Germany J	476	34	49.39				286 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				335 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
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227 115 Adlib Germany R	476	34	49.39				294 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				343 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
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243 115 Adlib Germany HH	476	34	49.39				310 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				359 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
244 115 Adlib Germany II	476	34	49.39				311 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				360 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
245 115 Adlib Germany JJ	476	34	49.39				312 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				361 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
246 115 Adlib Germany KK	476	34	49.39				313 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				362 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
247 115 Adlib Germany LL	476	34	49.39				314 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				363 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17			
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249 115 Adlib Germany NN	476	34	49.39				316 115 Adlib Germany	317	26	66.17				365 115 Adlib Germany	317</td					



■ POP 1

Sheryl Crow bounces back into the reckoning with a new album of quality songs



■ POP 2

... while Evan Dando adds a little grit to his mix on the Lemonheads' *Car Button Cloth*



■ POP 3

Dated already: revisiting Nirvana is like stepping back into the Stone Age



■ POP 4

John Mellencamp has something to get off his chest: a deep hatred for a band beginning with O

Solo discoveries as the Crow flies

NEW POP CDs: David Sinclair reports that talented Sheryl needs no outside help to make a great album

SHERYL CROW

Sheryl Crow
(A&M 540 592)

AFTER all the mean-spirited criticism Sheryl Crow has had to endure from the various malcontents who collaborated with her on *Tuesday Night Music Club*, it is a pleasure to report that this follow-up is as good as, if not better than, her eight-million-selling debut. Produced and for the most part, played by Crow herself, it is a collection that fully vindicates her abilities, although it must be said that the sequencing of the tracks does not do her any favours.

Maybe Angels, a sluggish song distinguished by a fluff-on-the-needle guitar sound, is not a promising track to open with and it is not until the fourth number, *Sweet Rosalyn*, with its gently shuffling beat and sweetly arching melody line that the album begins to gather momentum.

Crow is not, by inclination, a torchbearer for radical ideas, and those seeking dissonant progressions and wild tales of oral sex will need to go elsewhere (although the lyric to *Love is a Good Thing* has already got the record banned from an American chain store). But she extends her range with *Redemption Song*, a cry of protest with distinct echoes of Bob Dylan's *Masters of War*: "Come leaders, come you men of great/ Let us hear you pontificate".

And, on tracks such as *Hard to Make a Stand* and *If It Makes You Happy*, she distils a trad-rock riffing style, redolent of the Rolling Stones and Lou Reed, into quality songs of timeless appeal.

THE LEMONHEADS

Car Burton Cloth
(Tag Recordings/
Atlantic 7567-02726)

HAVING cracked up (and I use the term advisedly) in the wake of 1993's breakthrough album, *Come On Feel the Lemonheads*, Evan Dando returns to the fray older and wiser. Fronting yet another new Lemonheads line-up, he has certainly not abandoned the breezy, pop-grunge style he all invented, and songs such as *Hospital* and the current single, *If I Could Talk I'd Tell You*, have a superficially jaunty

SINGLE
THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS
Setting Sun
(Freestyle Dust/
Virgin CHEM 4)
ALTHOUGH written and sung by Noel Gallagher, *Setting Sun* sounds more like a Prodigy record than anything remotely resembling an Oasis song. Indeed, with its racing rhythm and hammerblow emphasis on the first beat in the bar, it could almost be "Son of Firestarter", until Gallagher's strange, dopey vocals start to penetrate from somewhere deep in the swirling mix.

A sinister, compelling and downright noisy experience, *Setting Sun* is a genuine monster on its way to No. 1.

air. The lyrics are another matter. "I'm past bleeding/It's not the tracks it's where they're leading," he sings on *Tenderfoot*, a far grittier song written by Tom Morgan and Adam Young that recalls the epic sweep of favourites such as *Li'l Seed* and *(The) Door*.

The punk-country sound of *Knoxville Girl* and *Outdoor Type* adds another dimension again, but at the spiritual heart of this album are a string of appealingly tough but soulful numbers — *Break Me, Losing Your Mind* and *One More Time* — that reveal a new strength of purpose in the music of this wayward talent.

NIRVANA

From the Muddy Banks of the Wishkah
(Geffen)

FOLLOWING on from 1994's *MTV Unplugged in New York* album, this adds another "live" postscript to the sorry tale of the greatest American band of the 1990s. But whereas the *Unplugged* session pointed a potential way forward for Nirvana, this LP, recorded at shows between 1989 and 1994, is very much a throwback to the way things used to be.

Attitudes have changed so much since then, not least, one suspects, as an unconscious reaction to the squalid manner of Kurt Cobain's death. So, although white-knuckle versions of songs such as *Lithium*, *Scentless Apprentice* and *Smells Like Teen Spirit* are an accurate document of their era, the coarseness of the production and the sheer weight of tortured aggression already sound surprisingly dated.

JOHN PARISH & POLLY JEAN HARVEY

Dance Hall at Louie Point
(Island 524 278)

THE little-known guitarist John Parish and the much-celebrated Polly Jean Harvey have conspired to make an album that is easy to admire rather harder to love. Parish supplies moody, stumbling, blues-derived backdrops for Harvey to decorate with her Gothic vocal scrawl. Beginning with a distraught murmur on *Rope Bridge Crossing*, she quickly builds up to a jarring peak of dementia on *City of No Sun*, in which she injects a note of sheer terror into her voice, while keeping it perfectly modulated.

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1 K	Kula Shaker (Columbia)
2 Travelling Without Moving	Jeanne Added (Sony 82)
3 The Score	Fugazi (Columbia)
4 New Adventures in Hi-Fi	R.E.M. (Warner Bros)
5 Jagged Little Pill	Alanis Morissette (Mercury)
6 Spiders	Spain (Gut)
7 Order	George Michael (MCA)
8 (What's the Story) Morning Glory?	Oasis (Creation)
9 Mosley Shoes	Ocean Colour Scene (MCA)
10 Ocean Drive	Lighthouse Family (Wild Card)

Copyright CN



Sheryl Crow rises above the backbiting after her first album to produce an excellent eponymous follow-up

Wisdom of an American fool

David Sinclair finds that John Mellencamp does not share our 'haircut mentality'



John Mellencamp has a message for Oasis: "Get lost. People aren't going to pay money in America to see a band that gets up there and cusses them. They might be big over here but people in America don't know what's popular in England. They don't care. You guys sent us a Flock of Seagulls, remember? Oasis — it's the same thing."

In Britain, of course, the response to this outburst is likely to be "John who?". For if Oasis have sold a "mere" three million records in America, then that is nearly three million more than Mellencamp has sold in Britain.

"So what. I've sold 40 million albums. Who cares? When they've sold 40 or 50 million albums, then you can say Oasis is something."

A rare and reluctant visitor to these shores, where he is still best remembered for the song *Jack and Diane*, a minor hit in 1982, he is nevertheless a superstar in America.

His 1982 album, *American Fool*, struck a huge emotional chord, with its storybook lyrics about ordinary, small-town folk set to brilliantly crafted bites of anthemic rock'n'roll. A string of massive selling albums ensued — *Uh-Huh* (1983), *Scarecrow* (1985) and *The Lonesome Jubilee* (1987) — records which helped to shape the course of mainstream American rock, while retaining a sense of homegrown individuality. But Mellencamp's music has always been too firmly rooted in the soil of his own culture to travel easily. His disdainful attitude to playing over here

days of the 1980s. Part of the excitement is due to the involvement of the New York club DJ, Junior Vasquez, who, as well as co-producing the album, is credited with "loops, grooves, percussion and other monkey business".

"I told the guys that I wanted to take the blues of the 1940s and combine them with the rhythms of the 1990s. To me that means Robert Johnson on the one hand and Tupak Shakur on the other."

Mellencamp has long pinned his colours to the mast of old-fashioned musicianship and the work ethic. Appearing at a media showcase at Dingwalls in North London earlier this month, he flooded an invited audience with a set of new songs and greatest hits performed with undeviating conviction and irresistible momentum.

The visit was to mark the launch of his new album, *Mr Happy Go Lucky*, already a Top Ten hit in America, where it is shaping up to be his latest success since the glory

steeped in the traditions of rural America.

Born in Seymour, Indiana on October 7, 1951, Mellencamp lives less than an hour away in a similarly small town called Bloomington. He takes pride in belonging to a rural community, describing himself and the band as "a bunch of hillbillies from Indiana". He speaks longingly of his desire to ease up and just spend his days hanging out. In reality, he is far too highly strung for such an existence, although he has had to take better care of himself since suffering a mild heart attack two years ago.

"I thought I was invulnerable, but I'm 44 and I've learnt from my mistakes. The goal is to keep going for 25 years: it isn't to be big for a moment and then disappear. You tell that to Oasis. Pride is a terrible enemy to a young man."

● *Mr Happy Go Lucky* is released on Mercury on October 7.

Caitlin Moran on Baby Bird, the band that tries to leave nothing to chance

Greatness lurks in the wings

Pop stars can usually be divided into two categories: the planners and the dreamers. The dreamers are those people with a 24-carat seam of good luck running through their bones. Everything is a happy accident: it is they who are "discovered" while singing absentmindedly at the bus stop; who bump into superstars who take a shine to them and guest on their debut album.

The planner

is so sure of his talent that he leaves nothing to chance; every detail is carefully worked out. The planner will find out the date of the president of EMI's daughter's birthday, and play a gig on a hired flat-bed truck outside her house. The planner will read and understand his contract, and will want to oversee every part of his career, making every poster, record-sleeve and gig a perfect distillation of his vision.

Enter Steve Jones of Baby Bird. "I started off as an actor, kind of. We'd interact with the audience — we hated the way performers pretend that there's no one there. But I started to starve, and decided to change careers. I'd been recording songs for ages, on a four-track, and I sent out demos to every record company in Britain. No one responded; they thought it was outrageous that I'd sent four-track demos, they wanted proper, professionally produced product."

"They also wanted a band.

"So I went out and got a band. Then I set up my own record company, Baby Bird Recordings, and started to release some albums."

Almost wilfully diverse, each album contains a miniature symphony, a smattering of ballads, several vivid bursts of garage-like pop, and at least three songs that are exercises in simply being Baby Bird. At their core is a real sweetness — everything seems to be approached with an almost childlike clarity.

The albums led to a feeding frenzy among the big record companies. "I was in the amusing position of being 'courted' by people who'd

cheap disposable razors. "The blood and gore was flour, water and red food colouring. It clings to your hair. I had little red bread eyebrows for two days afterwards."

So Steve, I say confidently, you are one of pop's planners. "Everyone thinks that," he smiles. "But we never planned a thing. I just wake up in the morning with an idea, and try and do something about it by the end of the week."

● *The single, You're Gorgeous, is released on Monday on Echo Records. The album, Ugly Beautiful, is out on Oct 25*

Chris Isaak Baja Sessions



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Scholarships and Open Days at Stowe

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Shropshire SY7 0BG
Telephone 01547 530 303
and 01547 530 742
Fax 01547 530 740

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For further information, contact Angus McPhail M.A., The Headmaster, Strathallan School, Forgandenny, Perthshire PH2 9EG. Tel: (01738) 812546. Fax: (01738) 812549.

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for entry in September 1997

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Further information and an application form may be obtained from the Registrar, Mrs B. Askew, Heathfield School, London Road, Ascot, Berkshire SL5 8BQ. Tel: 01344 882955 Fax: 01344 890689

Heathfield School is a Charitable Trust (No. 309086) providing full boarding education for girls aged 11-18 years.

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Hampshire

SIXTH FORM SCHOLARSHIPS AND PLACES for September 1997



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0181 688 9222/3/4

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Entry at 11, 13 and into Sixth Form

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Park Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 1DE
Telephone: 01235 531755

SCHOOL FEES AND UNIVERSITY COSTS



Marlborough College is a registered charity

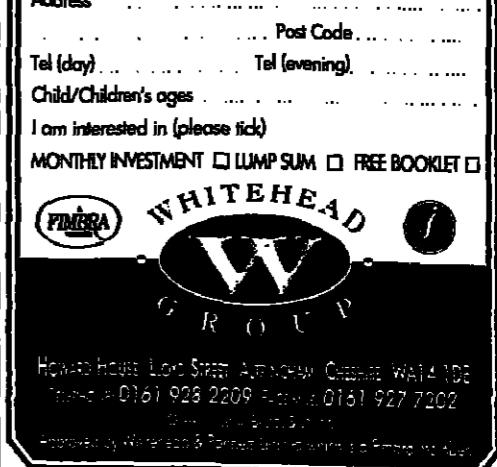
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Tel: 01832 274014 Fax: 01832 275174

Oundle School is a Registered Educational Charity: Number 309921



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SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS WISHING TO JOIN CLIFTON IN SEPTEMBER 1997

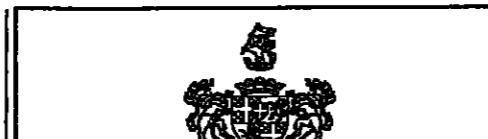
At least six awards of up to half fees for boarders and one-third fees for day pupils, are being offered for any combination of subjects, including one specifically for a boy or girl with a talent in music. All awards may be augmented by a bursary in the case of proven need.

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Clifton College is a charitable trust providing boarding and day education for boys and girls aged 13-18 years



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for
PROSPECTIVE 1997 LOWER
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starting at 2.15 pm

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Tel: 01344 771588 Fax: 01344 771715

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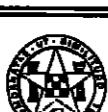
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* including separate VI Form Open Meeting

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Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 4HF
Telephone: 01923 773 168

The Rickmansworth Masonic School Charitable Trust exists for the advancement of education and the relief of need.
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Closing date for application: 30th November 1996

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Monday 28th October - 4.45pm - 6.45pm.

Closing date for application: 30th November 1996

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SIXTH

EDUCATION

Who survives under Labour?

As the Headmasters' Conference prepares to meet, John O'Leary examines the fears of independent schools

You would never guess it from the agenda for the biggest independent education conference of the year, which starts next Tuesday, that a potentially threatening change of Government may be only a few months away. Academic standards, the sixth-form curriculum and even drugs are down for discussion, but no mention of the general election.

Leaders of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) say that their line is sufficiently clear not to require further debate at this stage, but the corridors and bars at the conference in Glasgow will be alive with speculation about future Government policy. The suspicion must be that a decision has been taken not to rock the boat.

Despite concerns about assisted places, the independent sector has been getting on with new Labour better than expected. Threats of VAT on school fees were soon stilled, and Opposition spokesmen with an antipathy to private education seem to have taken a vow of silence.

Vivian Anthony, the Secretary of HMC, says: "We have been working hard to establish good relations with both the main Opposition parties, with, I think, some success. There is one issue on which we will have to fight like mad, but in other areas we can go along with what has so far been proposed."

The one issue, inevitably, is the fate of the assisted-places scheme. Most independent school heads accept that there is little chance of saving the scheme if Labour wins power, but the sector will renew its campaign in the months ahead. Some pin their hopes on the three-year notice period required under the existing contracts to remove assisted places. But Mr Anthony and others recognise that primary legislation could override this.

There seems no room for compromise. Labour has shifted its ground on all manner of education policies, but not only has the commitment to abolish assisted places been unswerving: the no-

tional saving has already been allocated elsewhere. Indeed, the £100 million cost of the scheme, earmarked for transfer to state primary schools, still represents the only firm guarantee of new money for education in the early years of a Labour administration.

Peter Kilfoyle, the Shadow Education Minister, left the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) in no doubt that the debate on assisted places was over. But he reminded his audience that another key issue for the sector, that of charitable status, was still on the table.

Many of the prep school heads were pleasantly surprised, nevertheless, by Mr Kilfoyle's speech, in

that it was just as many were absorbing the loss of assisted places. For the sector as a whole, it would almost certainly mean a protracted and expensive legal battle through the European courts.

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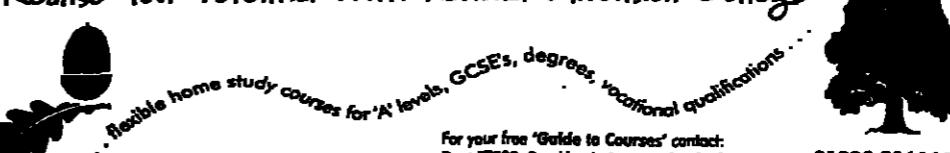
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FOOTBALL

Scotland reward McAllister's steady progress

BY KEVIN McCARRA

SCOTLAND squads have occasionally been accused of producing sterile play, but no one should ever underestimate the fertile thinking required to assemble them. Craig Brown, the national team's manager, announced his party yesterday for the World Cup qualifiers against Latvia and Estonia and managed to introduce some freshness at a time when, after poor results by clubs in European competition, the country's resources seem particularly stale.

Brian McAllister's career is untouched by glamour, but despite a gradual development that included spells on loan at Plymouth Argyle and Crewe Alexandra, the Wimbleton centre half has proved as tenacious as his club in the fight for status. At 25, the Glaswegian makes his first appearance in an international squad.

There is even a possibility, however remote, of a cap on the mini-tour — the matches take place on October 5 and 9 — since Colin Hendry, the usual incumbent, continues to have difficulties with a persistent knee injury. "He is a good athlete," Brown said, "who is similar in style to Colin Calderwood."

Four years ago, the manager toyed with the idea of selecting McAllister at under-21 level, but the team of 1992 proved good enough to reach the semi-finals of the European championship and access to it was difficult. That side was captained by Paul Lambert, whose career has taken a course even more astonishing than that of McAllister.

Until this summer he was a well-respected performer with Motherwell who could still expect no more for himself than a modest income and the struggle for a livelihood when his playing days were over. Like a few fortunate others,

though, his circumstances and expectations have been raised dramatically by the Bosman ruling.

When Lambert's contract at Fir Park ended he was fascinated by the thought of leaving and playing on the Continent. Even so, the mid-

A. Goran (Rangers), J. Leighton (Rangers), N. McAllister (Aberdeen), S. Boyd (Celtic), C. Burke (Celtic), Calderwood (Blackburn Rovers), P. Calder (Celtic), T. McIlroy (Celtic), D. Whyte (Middlesbrough), J. Collins (Monaco), S. Gemmill (Nottingham Forest), D. Jackson (Rangers), J. Johnson (Bolton), D. Jones (G. McAllister (Coventry City), S. McCall (Rangers), W. McKinlay (Blackburn Rovers), A. McCormick (Rangers), J. Spencer (Celtic), D. Stoenescu (Romania), K. Gaafar (Blackburn Rovers), E. Jess (Coventry City), W. Dods (Aberdeen).

field player was dumbstruck to discover from his agent that the German team interested in him was not some set of *Bundesliga* stragglers, but the champions themselves, Borussia Dortmund.

They had admired him ever since playing Motherwell in a Uefa Cup tie and the fact that no transfer fee was required only added to the appeal. The deft Lambert is now said to

have been signed by the German team and they are being threatened by someone like Lambert who is doing well at a high level."

As usual, though, most of the changes Brown is likely to make will be forced upon him. A large party of 24 players reflects the fact that Tosh McKinlay, Stuart McCall, Gordon Durie and Ally McCoist will probably all fail to overcome the injuries which make them doubtful.

With further damage expected to attacking resources already depleted by the loss of the injured Duncan Ferguson, Brown has included the uncapped Billy Dodds in the squad. The Aberdeen forward's 14 goals so far this season testify to a new maturity in the 27-year-old.

His efforts and those of the team as a whole may be widely scrutinised. The game in Latvia, on October 5, is now likely to be shown live on television since, with the kick-off put back to 6pm, it no longer clashes with the domestic programme of lower division matches in Scotland.

Also missing is Paul McGrath, although McCarthy

earn some £300,000 a year at Dortmund, a sum 12 times greater than he might have expected at Fir Park.

All the same, he has justified that surge in valuation. Brown hardly needed to hear the recommendation of Bert Vogts, the German coach. Lambert's place as a first team regular, even for the Champions' League victory over Steaua in Bucharest on Wednesday, has established his credentials.

The player has two caps already, both won in obscure matches, but Lambert's standing is now greater than ever. Brown is conscious that his squad contains men who are less firmly entrenched at their clubs.

"I have stood by Billy McKinlay, Eoin Jess and Scott Gemmill," said Brown, "but I will be talking to them."

"They must get into the first team and they are being threatened by someone like Lambert who is doing well at a high level."

As usual, though, most of the changes Brown is likely to make will be forced upon him. A large party of 24 players reflects the fact that Tosh McKinlay, Stuart McCall, Gordon Durie and Ally McCoist will probably all fail to overcome the injuries which make them doubtful.

With further damage expected to attacking resources already depleted by the loss of the injured Duncan Ferguson, Brown has included the uncapped Billy Dodds in the squad. The Aberdeen forward's 14 goals so far this season testify to a new maturity in the 27-year-old.

His efforts and those of the team as a whole may be widely scrutinised. The game in Latvia, on October 5, is now likely to be shown live on television since, with the kick-off put back to 6pm, it no longer clashes with the domestic programme of lower division matches in Scotland.

Also missing is Paul McGrath, although McCarthy

said that the Aston Villa central defender will be considered again when he is playing first-team football.

Keane, who has been ordered to rest after his leg became swollen overnight, only made his comeback from a knee injury in the draw at Aston Villa on Saturday. He has not played for his country since being sent off in the 2-0 defeat by Russia in Dublin last March. Injuries, suspensions and a much-publicised decision not to play in end-of-season matches in America means that he has missed the last eight internationals.

Aldridge could win his 69th cap against the Macedonians.

The 38-year-old forward has scored 19 international goals — just one short of Frank Stapleton's Irish record.

"John has been scoring goals for his club and that is good enough for me, especially with Niall Quinn and Jon Goodman injured," McCarthy said.

Keane could be out of action for up to three weeks after suffering a dead leg during Manchester United's European Cup Champions' League victory over Rapid Vienna in Wednesday evening.

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Laugh? I almost named the absent father

Dear Peter Lilley, I expect you are too busy to watch television at present, instead spending the evenings drafting your speech for the Conservative conference in your capacity as social security secretary. We all look forward to it, crackling as it will be with the usual hilarious one-liners and memorable bon mots. Not for nothing are you known as the Cabinet's answer to Gordon Brown.

However, even one of your speeches, so often confused with the writings of S.J. Perelman, may benefit from outside input. I suggest you call in a couple of terrific women from the Child Support Agency, as featured in last night's second part of *The System* on BBC2. Although the series is essentially about the serious matter of the welfare state (as you will know because you appeared in part one), these two proved to be unwitting providers of the light re-

lief that conference so craves. I offer two examples. Mr Lilley, confident that you will find room for them. One suits a conference speech particularly well, for it is an anecdote whose authenticity can possibly be established. Apparently a woman interviewed by the CSA said that she could not identify the father of her child because "at the time she was hanging out of a window at a party being sick".

I suggest you take a sip of water at this point. Mr Lilley (I certainly have) and back in the starting sight of the party faithful rolling in the aisles with their feet in the air, an inversion, more or less, of the position adopted by the woman in the anecdote. You might, as a linked postscript, add the suggestion by another woman at the CSA that the agency should send out condoms with its forms (loud applause from *prone faithful*).

Not that the Child Support

Agency is a laughing matter. Your speech will undoubtedly include the fact that the agency has collected £300 million this fiscal year, the first time it has met Government targets since its troubled formation in 1993.

Will you also be mentioning that the agency is in present over about £900 million, of which, according to the CSA itself, £700 million is "probably uncollectable"? On balance, I think I would incline towards omitting that bit, were I in your *Hush Puppies*. That could knock a full minute off the standing ovation, as could the unfortunate news that benefit savings credited to the CSA this year are just 5 per cent of all spending on lone parents.

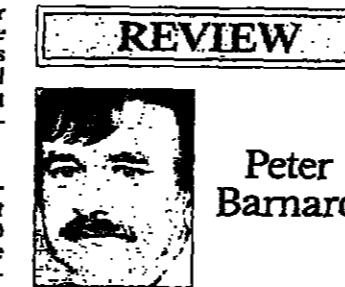
Mind you, the CSA is up against some pretty odd fellows: no wonder it needs a sense of humour. One chap said he should not have to pay child support because his

wife became pregnant through artificial insemination.

Another took a woman on a 21-day holiday abroad. He only enjoyed

three days, during which she became pregnant. He isn't paying because he had not wanted her to have a baby.

Last night's programme did contain, by implication, one money-saving suggestion that would surely bring conference to



Peter Barnard

its feet, once it has climbed back on to them from its position in the aisles. At present, the CSA gives women who are reluctant to name their child's father six weeks to do so. After six weeks, yet another letter is sent out giving them two more weeks, on pain of having their benefit reduced. At this point, the women start ringing the CSA.

May I suggest, Mr Lilley, that as

the threat in the second letter works, it would make sense to contain it within the first letter, thus saving several hundred thou-

sand stamps, envelopes and sheets of A4. Another change, slap on a nice uncheckable saving (£10 million sounds perfect), step back from podium, raise arms, bask in ovation. Yours in anticipation.

Of course social problems come in many guises and another of them was featured in *Inside Out: From the Ashes* (Channel 4). This was about Carol Rigby, who in

1978 started a fire at the National Theatre, where she worked as a nurse. The programme was the story of her rehabilitation, including a spell in Broadmoor and the painful attempts to face memories of abuse during childhood.

Carol says that she received minimal treatment in Broadmoor, where "they looked blank" when she mentioned the abuse. Latterly, the subject has become better understood and a psychiatrist advised how starting a fire was often "calling the fire brigade to your life", a redolent piece of imagery and a nice change from psycho-babble.

It was determined to mention *Top Gear* (BBC2) today in the hope that Jeremy Clarkson was behaving in his usual insufferable, though strangely endearing, manner. He nearly let me down, but then he made the following announcement after testing one vehicle: "I could call this car

fabulous, but it's much better than that."

Clarkson is a grand fellow who can drive you mad with crazy exaggerations. He needs bubble-captions sprouting from his lips with lots of exclamation marks, but effusive behaviour is *de rigueur* in motoring circles.

Top Gear is good at items which really matter to drivers and Quentin Willson reported last night on customer care, an area in which car companies have long been appallingly lax. A woman with a new car took four months to get a replacement steering rack and a man whose wife's car failed to start nine times in a row spent months extracting a replacement car, not wife.

There is good news: Rover are apparently right at the top in terms of looking after their customers and they're British. I throw that in as possible standing-ovation material for the transport minister.

REVIEW

CHOICE

English Country Garden BBC2, 8.30pm

The premise of Rosemary Verey's series is all but destroyed before the first programme is over. Calling on her friend and fellow gardening veteran, Christopher Lloyd, at his home in Sussex, Verey is told that "English country gardens are a messy and self-satisfied conception and that a garden is a garden. So there. But Verey has been in the business long enough not to be dismayed. Each programme features Verey's garden in Gloucestershire and visits to two others, such as the Prince of Wales's Highgrove, she helped to design. The thematic link is a journey through the seasons, starting, appropriately, in September. Verey hopes viewers will pick up ideas. But this is hardly a how-to-it exercise. Rather, for most of us, it is the chance to admire and perhaps envy gardens far grander than our own modest patches.

Shooting Stars BBC2, 9.00pm

Mindless panel games are ripe for parody but there is a danger of becoming the very thing you are trying to send up. Raucously directed by Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer, *Shooting Stars* continues to do its best to lampoon the genre. But so, under the incomparable Les Dawson, did *Blankety Blank*. And so, for more than 20 years on radio, has *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*. Admittedly no panel show can boast a sorer azz as bizarre as the extraordinary adult "baby" played by Matt Lucas. And the resident team captains are shrewdly cast, if only because Ulrika Jonsson never stops laughing and Mark Lamarr never stars. Tonight they are joined by Cannon and Ball, Samantha Beckinsale and Richard E. Grant. All enter into the irreverent spirit but overall there is more noise than wit.

All Rise for Julian Clary BBC2, 9.30pm

Since he co-wrote the show Julian Clary must know what he is doing but it seems an odd vehicle for his gentle camp humour. He casts himself as a judge, adjudicating on disputes between members of the public. There's a man called Bob who accuses his neighbours of forcing him to enter the Croydon in Bloom competition. He has won twice and has had enough. An 11-year-old lad accuses his mother of ruining his birthday party by ending it half an hour early. *Celebrities* are also put in the dock, starting with your favourite and mine, Lionel Blair. Such unexceptional content demands a big star performance at its centre. Whether the show gets one depends entirely on how you take Clary. "Do you remember *Rumble of the Ballyard*?", he asks, "well, I'm more rump than pole." There is more in similar vein.

Rory Bremner... Who Else? Channel 4, 10.30pm

The best comedy bit of the evening is the return of Rory Bremner, who is not only a matchless impressionist but gives his impersonations a sharp and topical edge. Because the show is recorded close to transmission, an overview of precise content is impossible. But with the party conference season in full swing, the political poster war shows no sign of abating and Labour's loose cannon continue to fire in all directions, it is reasonable to predict star parts for Major, Blair and anybody else from Westminster that Bremner can get his tongue round. The puns, as usual, is the dialogue of John Bird and John Fortune. The two Johns also pluck their material from the headlines but it is strong enough not to date, as free-standing repeats have amply demonstrated.

10.30 The Fall Guy In this last of the series Danny Brown has to persuade clients at a top hairdressing salon that he is a genuine stylist and then goes to referee a football match between two Manchester garages (Ceefax) (s) (75756)

10.30 Newsnight (Ceefax) (392758)

11.15 The Laundry Sanders Show (Ceefax) (s) (798355)

11.40 Saturday Night (Ceefax) (s) (612821)

12.30 Coronation Street (Ceefax) (s) (544233)

1.15 The House of Seven Corpses (1973) with John Ireland, Fath Domergue and John Canadine. A cheap but chilling horror. A film crew decide to use a reputedly haunted house as a location, a decision they soon come to regret. Directed by Paul Harrison (14909)

1.25am 1-3.00 Weather (2055374)

2.00 VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes

The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes, numbers which allow you to programme your video recorder to record a programme on VideoPlus+ without. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. Videoplus+ ("PlusCode") and Video Programme are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

Lloyd and Verey (8.30pm)

8.30 English Country Garden (Ceefax) (s) (2263)

9.00 Shooting Stars: Return of the celebrity quiz show (Ceefax) (s) (3973)

9.30 All Rise for Julian Clary (Ceefax) (s) (22534)

10.00 The Fall Guy (Ceefax) (s) (75756)

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EUROSPORT

7.00am Cycling (Ceefax) 8.30 Sales

8.00 Olympic Magazine (Ceefax)

8.30 Athletics (Ceefax) 10.30 Motoring Magazine

9.15 See Hear Breakfast News (Ceefax) (s) (247139)

9.30 Style Challenge (s) (4603535)

9.45 Kilroy (s) (163621) 10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (62805)

11.00 News and weather (Teletext) (4128553)

11.05 Film: *Where the Bitter Bloom* (1974)

12.00 Regional News and weather (Ceefax) (s) (2167421)

12.30 Style Challenge (s) (4603535)

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3.15 Kilroy (s) (163621) 10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (62805)

3.45 News and weather (Teletext) (4128553)

4.00 News and weather (Ceefax) (s) (2167421)

4.30 Style Challenge (s) (4603535)

5.00 News and weather (Teletext) (4128553)

5.30 News and weather (Ceefax) (s) (2167421)

6.00 News and weather (Teletext) (4128553)

6.30 News and weather (Ceefax) (s) (2167421)

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**GOLF 39**

Harrington's record
brings a smile
to Irish eyes

SPORT

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 27 1996

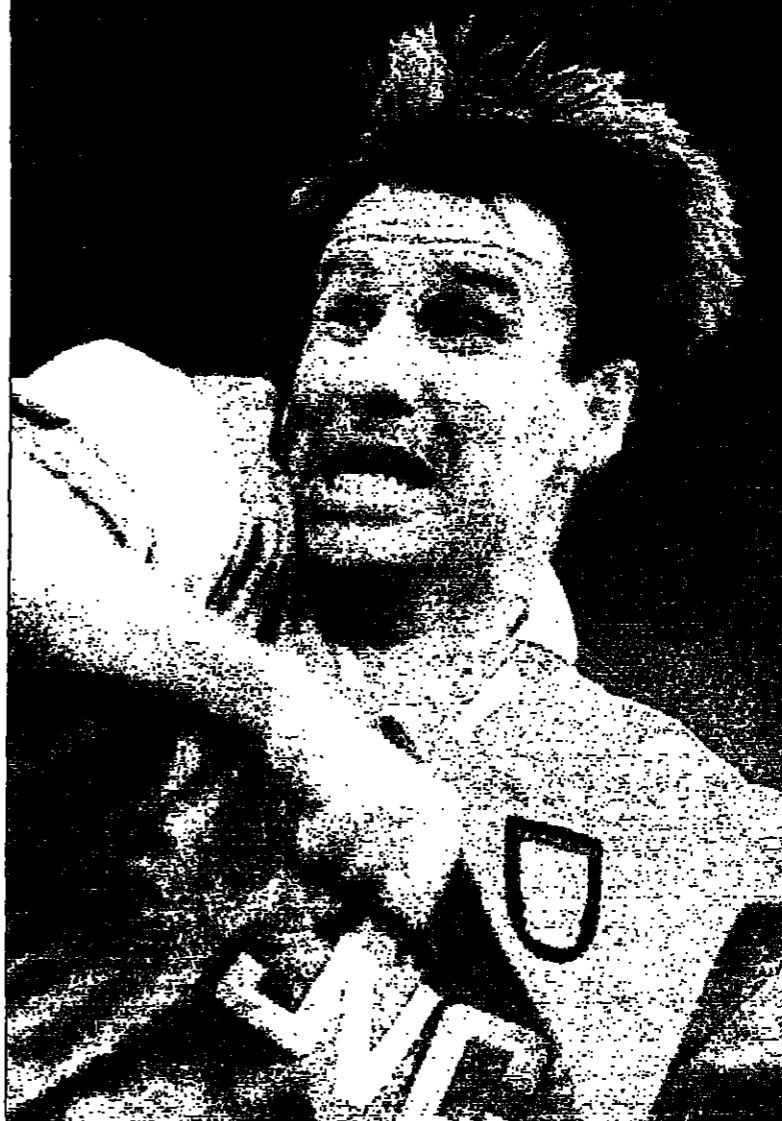
England recall for Arsenal midfield player completes welcome rehabilitation

Reformed Merson returns to the fold

By ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

ALL life, it sometimes appears, flows through the shirts of England's national football team. Yesterday, Glenn Hoddle, still a very young coach, selected his squad for the World Cup qualifying match at Wembley on October 9 against Poland. It includes, for the first time, Dominic Matteo, the Liverpool defender, who, by birth, could have played for Scotland and, by lineage, could have played for Italy, the land of his grandfather. Moreover, Hoddle reclaimed for his England camp Paul Merson, who, this time two years ago, seemed lost to Arsenal, lost to the game and very nearly lost to normal life as he fought addictions to alcohol, drugs and gambling.

Hoddle did not, this time, choose Neil Ruddock, being kept out of Liverpool's eleven



by Matteo. Ruddock spent yesterday in court in Southport, where Matteo was raised, and heard a magistrate tell him he had "blatantly lied" to police investigating the crashing of his Porsche 911. Ruddock, convicted of wilfully obstructing police after the accident involving his luxury sports car and a friend, was fined £300 and ordered to pay £200 prosecution costs — minuscule sums to the millionaire footballer's lifestyle.

Another player temporarily left out of Hoddle's selection is Tony Adams — not the England coach insisted, because he, too, has admitted an alcoholic dependency, but because his fitness after knee surgery does not warrant a recall.

Hoddle insisted that the choices he has made have been taken on "purely footballing grounds". Pure they may be, simple certainly not. On the human scale of things, the return of north

Merson's recovery, after his drinking, drug and alcohol addictions and the tearful confession of his problems, culminated with Wednesday's goal against Borussia Mönchengladbach and yesterday's England recall

London's errant son, Paul Charles Merson, now 28 and potentially at the prime of life where experience meets physical fitness, has messages far and wide. "Paul has come back this season leaner than ever, he is performing extremely well," Hoddle insisted. "Picking him has nothing to do with the other situation, whatever people might think."

Really? Hoddle conceded that, across the spectrum of society, there will be people "going through a bad time in life" who can draw an example from the way Merson is dealing with his problems. "It's a great example for people, who, perhaps, are not in the public eye," Hoddle said. "All credit to the lad [Merson]. All credit to the people who stood by him, people who counselled him... it takes a lot to come out and say the

things that Paul did. I'm not a counsellor, but I'm not sure that you ever do get over addictions. You only can deal with them and Paul Merson is doing that."

Merson himself resurrected an old footballing cliché yesterday. "I'm over the moon," he said. "I played 14 times for England before, but this is much, much bigger. I'm so proud, it hasn't just been me, me, me..." Then, as he has learnt to do, he listed the helpers — the Football Association, which, rather than banish the player and crush the man, became involved not just in his personal counselling but in setting up machinery to detect and help other vulnerable players; his family; even dear old Arsenal, with so many problems at its door, where David Dein, the vice-chairman, stood two years ago

and proclaimed: "Parents do not abandon their children and we are going to stand by them and Paul Merson is doing that."

And proclaimed: "Parents do not abandon their children and we are going to stand by them and Paul Merson is doing that."

his problems. His eyes vacant, his body trembling slightly, but his very presence brave in the extreme, he said: "This is the hardest thing I've ever done. But I want to get back into the Arsenal team first of all and then go all the way into

England's team again. That's not out of the question, I believe."

Yesterday, Merson, clear of eye and purpose, confessed again, though it was a very light confession. "I said that about England, but in the back of my mind I didn't think it was on. Stewart Houston [now departed from Arsenal to manage Queens Park Rangers] kept me going. He told me to aim for the stars and I might hit the roof. Today, I've hit the stars."

Merson is actually in better shape this season than many regular England players. He relaxed in the summer with his family in the United States, came back physically rested and mentally eager, compared to so many of the players of 16 countries who pushed themselves to the limits during Euro 96. Some of them —

Darren Anderton and Adams to name but two — ran through pain and have been footballing cripples ever since.

Matteo, by comparison, has seen little of the sporting high life. Born in Dumfries, Scotland, 22 years ago, with a grandfather, Angelo, who came from central Italy to open a fish and chip shop in Scotland, he and his family moved to Southport when he was five. He became a noted 1,500 metre runner, but preferred football and spent three seasons in reserve to four central defenders who cost Liverpool almost £12 million purchase. By the end of last season, he had played only 23 first-team games, some of those on the left side of defence or midfield.

"We must have had 20 or 30 offers to buy him or take him on loan," Roy Evans, the

Liverpool manager, recalled. "We refused them all. We were waiting for his talent to come out for us."

As a player with an eye for coming out of defence with the ball, a defender who can pass, a player comfortable in the central position of a mobile three-man defence, Matteo is in embryo what Hoddle is looking for, indeed what Terry Venables sought before him.

Until yesterday, Matteo did not believe that he was on the brink of England selection. He is still only that and the coach reiterated last night: "I've seen Matteo three times, John Gorman, my assistant, has seen him three times and every scout we've sent came back marking him nine out of ten. But I agree with Roy Evans: he's got to prove it over more than eight or nine games. I think he can."

Matteo rewards Dalglish's judgment

By PETER BALL

FEW people, if any, have made as large a contribution to Liverpool Football Club as Kenny Dalglish and one of his minor decisions for the club was marked yesterday with the selection of Dominic Matteo in the England squad for the World Cup qualifying match with Poland next month.

Dalglish not only signed Matteo for Liverpool during his time as the manager at

Anfield, but he was instrumental in taking Matteo to the club, spotting him playing for Birkdale United while watching his own son, Paul. His progress is further evidence of the success of Liverpool's youth policy, which Dalglish was instrumental in establishing and which has seen Matteo joining Robbie Fowler and Steve McManaman in the England squad.

Although he got into the team earlier than Fowler, during Graeme Souness's time

as manager, Matteo's development has been slower. Nevertheless, Roy Evans, the present Liverpool manager, said yesterday: "I've always bracketed Dominic with McManaman, Fowler and Jamie Redknapp, even though he wasn't in the team for a while when they were. There was a time when I was not sure if he'd make it — when he was 19, he didn't seem as mature as a 19-year-old should be — but now he has matured mentally and physically. Now,

he goes out with the right mental attitude all the time."

So much so that he is keeping Neil Ruddock and John Scales out of the Liverpool team. His performances at the heart of the defence have been one of the key elements in their successful start to the season, his ability on the ball even leading to comparisons with Alan Hansen, the stylish former Liverpool defender, who said, generously, of Matteo yesterday: "He's a better player than I was at 22."

Swindon back new game of chance

Russell Kempson on a first division club's novel venture into the world of gambling

"I don't think the temptation to gamble will be a problem for our players — they're all sensible lads," McMahon said. "Anything which raises money for the club has got to be a good idea. Perhaps it will give us an incentive when the chips are down." McMahon is also receiving treatment for bad scriptwriting.

Grosvenor, a subsidiary of The Rank Organisation, is the largest casino operator in the United Kingdom, with 32 venues. It claims that the latest addition to its stable, a project costing £2 million, will create 100 jobs locally.

"The perception of casinos is misunderstood," Mike Allison, the Grosvenor chairman said. "People believe what



they see on TV or in the movies is that it is an expensive, 007-type environment, but it really isn't like that. It is non-elitist entertainment, a low-cost mainstream leisure activity. Our average member visits us once a month and spends less than £200."

Grosvenor is still playing the percentages, though the dice do appear to be loaded in its favour. It is banking on changes to the 1968 Gaming Act that will allow it to open in Swindon, on planning permission from Thamesdown Borough Council, Swindon's landlords, and the granting of a gaming licence.

The casino, 12,000 square feet wedged into a corner of the County Ground, will not affect the stadium's 15,760 capacity. From 2pm to 4am each day, punters will be able to indulge in roulette, blackjack, stud poker or *punto banco*. If they need a break, and Swindon are at home, there is a viewing gallery.

Bond gathered his chips and turned to leave, ignoring the plaintive cry from the blonde. He put on his red scarf, stepped out on to the balcony and readied himself. It was 7.45pm. "Come on you Robins."

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Fashion parties to kill for

Party-hopping Joseph Connolly mingles with the glittering, the glamorous and the just-plain gorgeous at Italy's newest festival of style

The hurly-burly of the international fashion season was kicked off in quite some style last weekend with all the glitz opening thrashes at the very first Florence Biennale. There I was (don't quite know why) with an entree to all the parties and events that were, according to the fashion press, simply to kill for (you don't die any more, you kill). Much of the fashion press pack is, of course, from another constellation. "Lovely top," says a slimline despot of some frightened woman's blouse. "Whose is it?" Frightened woman practically has a seizure at what she understands to be a barely veiled accusation of theft, but already the fashion guru is unashamedly groping the nape of now practically hysterical woman before sighing, "RH — as I thought: *not Prada*."

Prada comes up a lot — they make tight black nylon clothes, largely, and natty little knapsacks; when it rains in Florence, all the glamorous women look like blonde and glossy seals. The fashion mob talks of other things too, of course — such as "is John Galliano really going to Dior?" Why shouldn't he? It's no big deal — I've been there myself. On the plane, someone showed me a feature in a glossy devoted to Donna Karan and I said, blimey O'Reilly, she knows how to charge, doesn't she? Whereupon my companion said quietly (and with a stricken expression) that DK was not currently in NY but was, in fact, occupying the seat directly behind me. I revolved for a

squint and maybe a chat, but she seemed to be a large, unsmiling woman, so I let it go.

At Florence airport, however, she practically got a round of applause from a posse of Italians: they see clothes differently there, as became increasingly clear.

The first party to kill for was at Versace — a surprisingly discreet invitation for cocktails. Red carpet stretched into the street, bordered by not just

velvet rope but also a cohort of

'When it rains the women look like blonde seals'

De Niro look-alikes, all with suspicious armpits. Inside was a curious blend of odish men in slippery suits and tribes of thin, orange women tight wrapped in not-much chocolate silk ("black is now brown"), a fashion hack told me — you may care to know this) and topped off with a sort of Rod Stewart-meets-Worzel Gummidge flagrant rick of yellow hair. But get this — no cocktails. Can you believe it? A few of the more fabulous guests had been lent an empty glass for the evening, but for the rest of us — forget it. A rumour softly flourished to the tune of a half full flute of something having been sighted on the upper floor, but the hearsay was third party and therefore ignored. There were open bottles of stuff called Green Jeans and Yellow Jeans, but no one seemed inclined towards an exploratory swig. People went briefly mad when Gianni himself made an entrance between a matched pair of Babarillas, but he hadn't brought any drink with him so I thought, well sod it then — I'm off.

Liz Earle, from GMTV, had also had enough of being frankly incredulous so a few of us (including the fashion editor of *Hello!* — my interpreter) sloped off to a rumbustious bistro called Coco Lezzone where there were pictures of the Prince of Wales on the wall, which is fairly odd. The queue was endless and barely moving and then Jarvis Cocker came in (maybe to meet Damien Hirst who was slumming in a corner) and suddenly the queue moved like billy-o as it was elbowed into the region of the scullery so that Jarvis could be quickly seated: I can't tell you how happy I was for the lad.

The party, though, was at Ferragamo, in the most superb 13th-century palazzo you could ever imagine, recently restored at a cost approximating to all the Nazi gold in Zurich. *La tutta Firenze* glittered beneath the chandeliers, and the champagne came at you thick and fast. There was the British milliner extraordinary, Philip Treacy, touche in black, dark glasses and, um, a stetson (I suppose because he is a hatter — just as well Janet Reiger wasn't there). He has an exhibition at the Pitti Palace, which is a half full flute of something having been sighted on the upper floor, but the hearsay was third party and therefore ignored. There were open bottles of stuff called Green Jeans and Yellow Jeans, but no one seemed inclined towards an exploratory swig. People went briefly mad when Gianni himself made an entrance between a matched pair of Babarillas, but he hadn't brought any drink with him so I thought, well sod it then — I'm off.

There there is also a very grand Pucci retrospective. I got myself around a litre or so of champagne as I mingled, telling everyone in pidgin European that come the dawn I was off to the Pucci at the Pitti. So there I slumped, chatting and sipping with the thoroughly gorgeous Louise Germaine (star of Dennis Potter's *Lipstick On Your Collar*) newly arrived and due to model the Ferragamo collection for a *Hello!* shoot the following morning (champagne permitting).

Ms Earle was filming an interview with Ungaro in a discreet corner and the entire Ferragamo family (Wanda, the widow of the founder Salvatore, her three daughters and three sons) managed to be amusing and glamorous, casual and stylish all at once and were attracting every manner of faint-makingly elegant personage like mosquitoes to my poor, pale and English body.

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pausing only to down a quart of champagne, I lurched off across the Ponte Vecchio and was very miffed indeed by the firmly barred door of what turned out not to be the Uffizi at all, but even when I did locate the right museum it appeared that Elton had never been there. "Never mind," I said gaily to the pack of fools who had followed me. "Tomorrow I'm going to see the Pucci at the Peachey! Anywhere round here we can get a day for a fortnight — these people must be mad."

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Open skies in America — for all of us

Richard Branson puts the case against the BA-American link-up

The next few weeks are crucial for the future of British aviation policy, and for our country's thus far highly successful airline industry. Talks on bilateral air service arrangements between the UK and US Governments are approaching crunch point. What comes out of the crunch is of vital importance, not just to governments and airlines, but to the millions of airline customers who fly the Atlantic.

At stake is the continuance of one of the great commercial success stories of the 20th century: the explosion of demand for transatlantic travel. This occurred in response to the British Government's decision in the early 1980s to break with convention and encourage airlines to compete in the interests of the consumer.

The current talks are supposed to be about "open skies", which sounds like a good thing and would be a good thing. But the term is deceptive. To the UK, it means unfettered access to Heathrow for American carriers, plus rights to pick up passengers there and fly them on to European destinations. But the flip side of Washington's apparent commitment to competition is that our airlines are denied any corresponding right to fly domestic passengers between American cities — the right known as cabotage — or even to carry US Government employees

and contractors or US mail across the Atlantic, and that no UK passport holder should own or control a US airline. It makes recent US legislation denying visas to British businessmen who have traded with Cuba look positively benign.

The "liberalisation" of air travel advocated by both Republican and Democratic administrations makes not even a token attempt to open America's massive internal market to competition from carriers like Virgin, or British Airways for that matter. Britain now has the chance to prise that door open and create new and exciting opportunities for airlines and passengers alike.

I do not blame the Clinton Administration for trying to create the best climate possible for American airlines, even if it is blatantly protectionist and anti-competitive. However, I set great store by the British Government's repeated pledges to resist this mockery of true "open skies" and represent the interests of British airlines just as forcibly, particularly as they coincide with those of the consumer.

Such a commitment by successive Transport Secretaries echoes this Government's track record of curbing some monopolies and encouraging competition. It has been especially welcome to Virgin Atlantic, which in just over ten years has come from nowhere to become the third largest player on the transatlantic stage, with a 5 per cent share of all seats between the whole of Europe and the US, compared with BA's 14.6 per cent. It has also transformed transatlantic travel even for those passengers who have never flown Virgin. Standards have risen across the board as competition has forced airlines to concentrate on putting the passenger first — quite a wrench for some.

Virgin's success, achieved in the face of bitter resistance from vested interests and without access to the most attractive slots at Heathrow, spectacularly vindicates the British vision of a multi-airline industry following the collapse of Laker. Through the jobs it has created, the

There is nothing in the planned alliance for passengers

foreign exchange brought in and the exposure won world-wide for a successful British product, it has proved that competition in the air works, not just for the consumer but for UK plc.

What is more, it has boosted Britain's image as a country still capable of blazing a pioneer trail. There are even greater opportunities for Virgin, BA and indeed airlines such as Britannia, British Midland and Air UK if the British negotiators and the ministers instructing them secure the true liberalisation they have so doggedly fought for.

Cabotage would not just benefit those passengers carried between US airports. By filling seats on those half-full planes from Heathrow or Gatwick, it would turn marginal transatlantic routes into viable ones and encourage the operation of new services from Britain by reducing the time it would take before they broke even.

Virgin is already a well-known brand in the US for everything from cola to record stores. If BMW can build cars in South Carolina and Virgin can sell cola in Pennsylvania, why cannot we fly Americans from New York to Los Angeles? And if these rights are granted, why shouldn't US carriers fly within the European Union — in both cases creating additional competition and reducing fares?

The pressure in air talks with the US is always acute as the final cards are dealt. Our negotiators face a formidable battery of pressures and blandishments, but they must continue to resist them and emerge with an agreement offering genuine opportunities for airlines based on both sides of the Atlantic to compete and offer the passenger an even better deal as we move into a new millennium.

They must not be seduced by the American argument that if their carriers get those slots now, UK airlines may be offered concessions later. And they must continue to spurn the siren voices murmuring that an unsatisfactory "open skies" deal is a price worth paying so that BA can form an unholy union with American Airlines.

I have had plenty to say elsewhere about the anti-competitive and anti-customer thrust of the planned BA-American link-up. It obviously makes sense for the two giant airlines struggling to contain their costs and increase profits for their shareholders, but there is nothing in it all for the passenger wanting the greatest choice and the best fares.

You do not have to take my word for it — BA's own partner, USAir, has been even more outspoken and that should sound a warning to UK carriers against relying on alliances with other airlines as the only means of gaining access to the protected US domestic market.

If we abandon our aspiration to compete in the US domestic airlines market, the only other major concession that could be prised from Washington is anti-trust immunity for the BA/American alliance. There are no criteria on which a measure actively benefiting one British carrier and handicapping its competitors can be spin-doctored as furthering the interests of the UK aviation industry, let alone promoting the interests of the 12 million people who travel every year by air between Britain and the United States.

Vanity fair

BEAUTY BULLETIN: Paddy Ashdown uses a sunbed. This shocking news emerged down in Brighton at the Liberal Democrat conference. One of the beauticians at the Metropole Hotel let slip that last Saturday, just before the conference, Ashdown checked in for a UV session.

Throughout his eight years as leader of the Lib Dems, Ashdown has cultivated a he-man image. Ex-

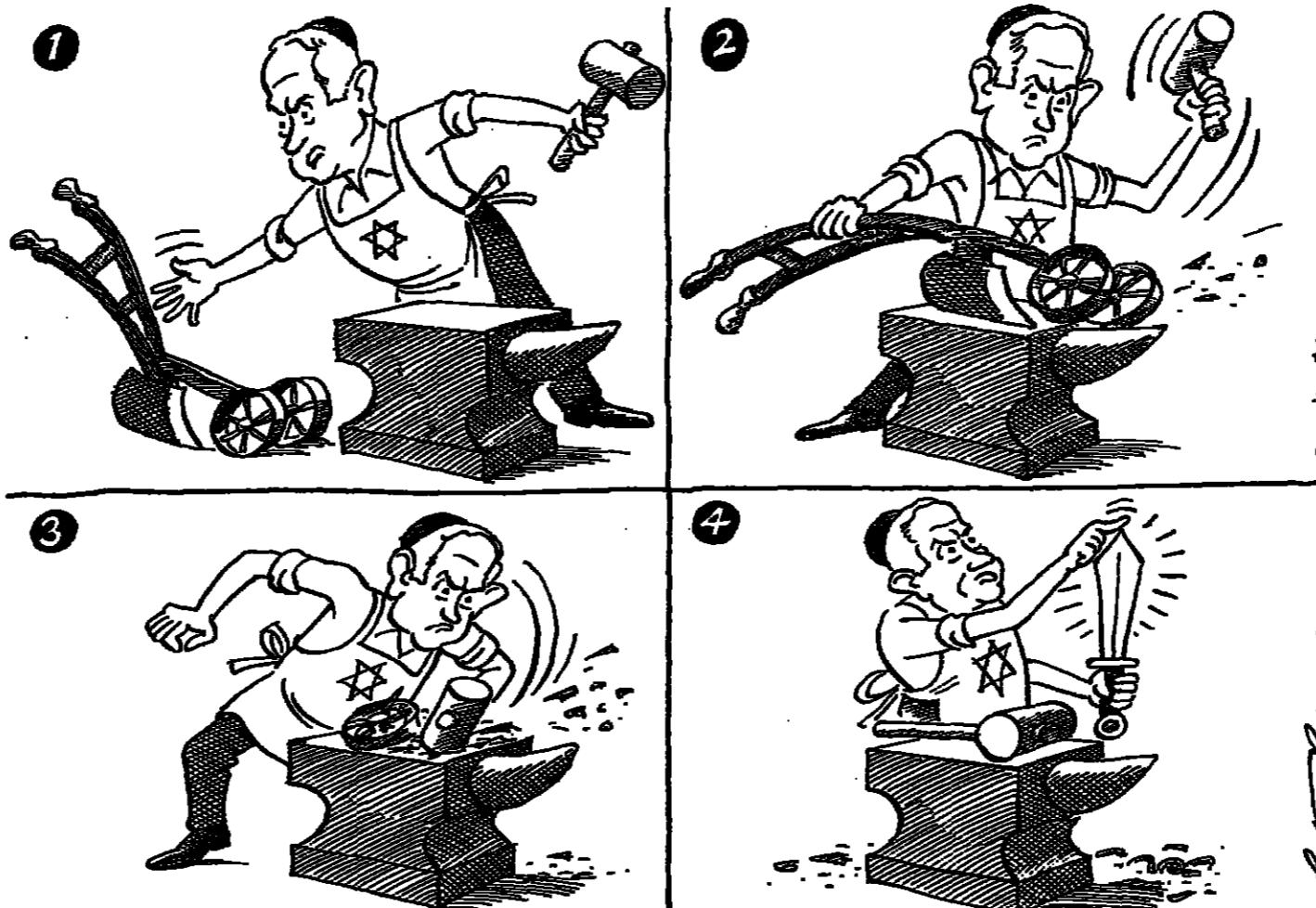
Marine, keen runner, occasional lothario, his ruddy-faced vigour has always put the other party leaders to shame. His deep tan at the conference attracted many jealous comments.

Now his vanity is out, however, and the Lib Dems' election plan to tout him as a presidential man of action looks to be in trouble.

Ashdown's office is ready with excuses. "He goes about four times a year, ever since a doctor told him it would soothe a minor skin complaint." No need for such sensitivity. At the Tantallon suntan centre in Knightsbridge, up to 40 per cent of members are men. Admittedly, most of them are "male models who need to look tanned for their work". Or politicians obsessed about their saddle-bag skin.

Hot seats

FAR MORE alarming to Tony Benn than being kicked off for his involvement with Gerry Adams, is his extraordinary new office arrangements for the new term at Westminster. Due to maintenance works, he has been forced to bunk up in a committee room with two highly unlikely room mates. Keith



They shall beat their swords into ploughshares... (Isaiah Ch. 2, v.4)

Oswald and Nicholas

My mother cried as the fascists marched past with Mosley as leader

has hired alien mobs to yell self-destructive and

Trying to exculpate what cannot be exculpated, Mosley Junior writhes in real pain when he has to say things of Mosley Senior like this: "He allowed his party to become infested with followers who were openly anti-Semitic; they looked for scapegoats to excuse the movement's foaming sense of purpose. The marches through the East End of London in 1936, culminating in the Battle of Cable Street, were heavily offensive to Jews: this provocation was morally indefensible and self-destructive."

And that is where I come in, because Mosley's march went through the street in which I then lived, and as the march went on, with Mosley of course at the head, and the eight-year-old Levin, sitting on the windowsill with my mother's hand clutching him, I had the first (but by no means the last) sample of anti-Semitism, as Mosley's cohorts marched in good order, chanting in perfect time, "The Yids, the Yids, we gotta get rid of the Yids... the Yids, the Yids, we gotta get rid of the Yids..." It meant nothing at all to an eight-year-old but I do remember that my mother was crying. And when I look at Nicholas Mosley and his father, I shed no tears, but I shake my head in wonder, that a good man could be so wicked.

Now before I get into an argument, I must say that Nicholas Mosley, Oswald's son, has himself no taint of anti-Semitism anywhere in him. He has had a terrible life in loving his father but watching his father's vileness, so much so that the struggle has given him a tragic stammer. He made a new life for himself as a novelist (a successful one) but he sometimes says silly things like "My father always claimed that he was not personally anti-Semitic, and I believed him".

Well, he shouldn't have done. One example out of scores (I take it from an admirably scholarly book by W.F. Mandle) will do: at a rally, Mosley was heckled, and our hero said that the hecklers were the "...sweepings of the continental ghettos, hired by Jewish financiers... the yelping of a Yiddish mob... alien Yiddish finance..." What they call today the will of the people is nothing but the organised corruption of Press, cinema and Parliament... ruled by Jewish finance... the same finance which

Not enough. To start with,

Mosley senior wanted to be an important person — hence all these stampings about, and making new organisations. But he must have been the most impatient man in history: hence the anti-Semitism, I believe that Mosley was not a rooted Jew-baiter, but was looking around for yet another flag to wave over yet another chimerical success. The truth of Oswald Mosley is that, for all his posturing, he was nothing solid or substantial, and that is why he never got closer to taking over the world, but had to be content with a few broken Jewish windows. (Incidentally, his widow is still alive in her nineties, but does not now discuss these matters — just as well, as many who knew her say that she was then even more anti-Semitic than her husband and the things she wrote and published suggest that was no exaggeration.)

Probably, many of my younger readers, and a good number of my middle-aged ones, do not know that the Mosleys were detained in prison (though not as criminals) throughout the war. So were many of the more prominent fascists — they were incarcerated on the Isle of Man. When the war was over, Mosley shut up for a time, and a few of his erstwhile followers tried to keep the flame alight, but they petered out. Almost incredibly, when he thought the coast was clear, he started up again this time it was not anti-Semitism but the blacks: he went to one of his indoor rabbles to hear him ranting about blacks having priority over whites in housing. But it was pitiful; the old stridency, the aged followers, the obvious repetition — he was spent for ever and went to live in France until he died.

Another vignette: the Mayor of Birmingham was entertaining Mosley, solely as a gesture of politeness before the Fascist boss was due to speak: the Brummie mayor had made clear that any mingling was to be on a strictly non-partisan level, so when Mosley entered and gave the Fascist salute, that his father wasn't a racist. That is too harsh, perhaps; God forbid I should have to take the measure of a vile man's life. True, Nicholas Mosley sees now through the eyes of a loved father long dead. Let him alone, he has suffered enough, and if he forgets, the stammer won't.

Philip Howard



■ The emu is a pathetic bird, if not indeed a fallacy

The emu is a silly bird. It sprints through the sand, with its wings flapping vainly, for it can't take off or land. While in this condition, it can only boom ERM, which frightens the natives and makes Europhobes squirm. For emu is a creature like Doctor Dolittle's Pushmi-pullyu, inspiring rage or enthusiasm at either end.

The emu is indeed a fabulous bird. A pathetic bird in the original sense of inspiring passion and terror, rather than the schoolboy slang "pathetic" meaning wimpish and jolly-switz. Even its name is a curiosity. The older and etymologically better spelling was emeu, crustily clung to by professors of the Zoological Society. But that is now obsolete. When he got round to the Banda Islands in Indonesia in 1613, Samuel Purchas, literary heir to Hakluyt, called the emu "admirable" (barbecued with cloved Saucy Brussels?). Purchas guessed that its name was native. More careful etymologists derive emu from the Portuguese *ema*, originally denoting the crane, but afterwards applied to the ostrich. However, a bolder derivation suggests that emu is one of those rare words (and even rarer birds) to travel into English from Egyptian. In Egyptian, transliterating as well as we can, *genu* means a crane, and *nau* or *nu* means an ostrich. The latter could be pronounced *emu* and then eased to *emu*. At any rate so speculates Eric Partridge, world explorer of the magical seas of language.

The emu is a controversial bird (word). Many wars seem stupid, or at any rate avoidable, when considered by the long eye of history. But the Great Emu War of 1935 is a contender for the title of stupidest. Farmers in western Australia, enraged by the emus trampling their crops with their big, flat, three-toed feet, appealed to the Government for help. The Government sent troops with machine guns after the birds. But the emus led the soldiers a wild-emu-chase for more than a month and by the end of it the casualties were 12 emus killed and many soldiers injured and emu-phobes for life.

Like their most passionate supporters, emus are stout-bodied, long-legged and dirty-eaters — virtually omnivorous. They mate for life, but the male sits on the eggs for 60 days, or until delays or fudges for as long as incubation takes. There are up to 15 eggs at present, dark blue and patterned with golden EU stars. The emu is a wild-emu-chase for more than a month and by the end of it the casualties were 12 emus killed and many soldiers injured and emu-phobes for life.

Oswald Mosley didn't murder anybody, or help to do so, but he did and said vile things — vile things which were not just like that bit of doggerel above. His son is an honorable man who would not say vile things, not even the least of them. But when Mosley Junior says that his father wasn't a racist, he had better smile as he says it.

That is too harsh,

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God forbid I

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DAMAGE LIMITATION

Netanyahu must move swiftly to salvage peace prospects

The rapidly rising numbers of those shot dead in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has badly shaken the Middle East peace process. Although it has not been yet destroyed, swift and concerted action by Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat is needed to keep the structure intact.

For three months now both men have conducted separate political balancing acts. Mr Netanyahu has slightly softened his own stance during the Israeli election campaign. He has met Mr Arafat and eased the economic blockade imposed by his predecessor. At the same time, however, he has sought to reassure his own hardliners by extending settlements. Mr Arafat, too, has sent out conflicting signals. He desperately wants negotiations with the Israeli Government. Nevertheless, he has periodically adopted intransigent language in order to protect his own position.

Until this week both men had managed these internal dilemmas in a manner just compatible with their mutual good. The alternative to reconciliation — violence on the West Bank and the collapse of Arab-Israeli relations — was sufficiently unattractive to limit friction. But the impression has grown among Palestinians that the peace process is captive to a domineering Mr Netanyahu. This growing anxiety allowed the opening of a second entrance to a tunnel near the al-Aqsa mosque to become such a dramatic flashpoint.

Mr Arafat needs to restore his authority. In the last 48 hours it has been unclear who has been in command of Palestinian security forces. Dialogue was not advanced by his decision to cancel the scheduled meeting of the Israeli-Palestinian steering committee. As economic discontent fuels opposition to his own rule, Mr Arafat's call for strikes is counter-productive. Similarly, the demand from Mohamed Sobeh, Palestinian delegate to the Arab League, that Israel's neighbours should isolate it until Likud adopts

polices of Shimon Peres will not help matters either. But most of the movement must come from the Israeli Government. There are three means by which discontent might be defused. The first concerns the tunnel that provided the symbolic spark. King Hussein of Jordan has proposed that all activity around the site be suspended while an international committee evaluates whether it does threaten the third most holy Islamic holy site. This should be accepted.

Secondly, Israel has the power to ease the crisis of unemployment and under-employment in the West Bank and Gaza. It can do so by granting more work permits to Palestinians. Mr Netanyahu has recently announced an increase in such papers from 32,000 to 50,000. If he moved to the 70,000 figure sought by Mr Arafat this would dramatically improve living standards and help to deradicalise those currently throwing stones in the streets.

Both initiatives would ease immediate tensions. But the paramount issue is Hebron. For five months Israel has prevaricated on the status of its troops as determined under the Oslo accords. That agreement permitted Israeli soldiers to stay in a sixth of the city to protect the Jewish settlers resident there, while the remainder would pass to the Palestinian National Authority. Mr Netanyahu has often repeated a desire to modify that arrangement, but he has not produced an alternative. This delay has wider ramifications. The three further West Bank redeployments specified within the Oslo text are contingent on it. The crucial final status talks cannot proceed properly without a Hebron deal.

Mr Netanyahu has shown a pragmatic streak during his 10 days in office. His Government has switched tack before to keep the peace process afloat. He needs to do so again. Israel will otherwise face both the alienation of Egyptian and Jordanian allies and an enduring anarchy on its doorstep.

SPANISH MOTHERS

Where have all the children gone?

For reasons real and imagined, because of our historical experience and our apprehensions, Spain is fixed in the British imagination as a Roman Catholic stronghold. The Armada, the Inquisition, Jesuits, Opus Dei, General Franco and widows in black have conspired to paint for us a picture of religion and deep faith: our Spain was a place of large families, productive mothers and smiling, ever-present children. How very unlike modern Spain, it seems, this age-old picture now is.

As our Madrid correspondent writes today, the Spanish are now, in important respects, ever more "like us". They are becoming agnostic towards their religion, democratic in their political arrangements, entertained by American TV and, most unexpectedly of all, demonstrably uninterested in having children. Spain's women today have fewer children than women anywhere else in the world.

This last fact is, inevitably, the most eloquent proof of Spain's modern cultural revolution: for nothing reveals change in society better than changes which occur in the heart of the family. General Franco, were he to return today for a stroll down Madrid's Gran Via, or a visit to a university, or lunch at a lawyers' firm, would not recognise the country to which he devoted so much attention. Most of all, he would not recognise its women.

They are, of course, as elegant as they always were. But whereas once they stayed at home — having children, cooking meals, and tending to the needs of their family — they are now an important force in the labour market. As Spain's dictatorship gave way to its democracy, and as its society

moves from being overwhelmingly patriarchal to one which is only mildly so, its women have emerged to study, qualify, work and compete. Spanish Man seems to have changed as well, at a pace remarkable for a society which was once so steeped in machismo. There are probably fewer complaints in Spain about the presence of women in trades and professions than there are in Britain. There are even female bullfighters.

Naturally, all of this progress has taken its toll on customs and values. Just as the siesta has almost disappeared, so too has the practice of having large families. Women's emancipation, male moderation and the dizzying decline in the influence of the Roman Catholic Church over the everyday affairs of Spanish people have all contributed to this voluntary infertility. The State, which once awarded "motherhood prizes" to the most frequently pregnant women, has the laissez-faire attitude to family life which is the hallmark of the Western world.

Migration from rural areas to towns and cities is a powerful trend in Spain, and urban arrangements, with cramped space and expensive commodities, are a very effective form of contraception. Spanish society must now grapple with the same problems as do those societies with which it has made common cause. Yet Spain is not a populous country. Church and State under General Franco conspired to keep Spain's birthrate artificially high. That conspiracy may not have been all bad. As the country grows greyer, and its mothers persevere with their 1.2 babies per head, it may one day look back wistfully on the days of its "motherhood prizes".

A MAN WITHOUT HIS BOOKS

A small solace for Sir Frank amongst his wreckage

Every bibliophile's worst nightmare came true for Sir Frank Kermode, one of our greatest living literary critics, when he lost some 2,500 books and documents to the Cambridge refuse collection service. Sir Frank's loss is both unquantifiable and irreparable; he deserves our sympathy. For many of us, our most revealing possessions are the books we own: they are the bound manifestation of our passions, our capacities, our very souls. A man of letters accumulates books over a lifetime and each one is a stone in his mental mosaic. To lose his library is, for such a scholar, like being robbed of his reflection: sans books, he is sans everything.

For a scholar to be deprived of his library is a fearful fate, even if self-inflicted. The eminent German jurist Carl Schmitt, who had served the Third Reich as an apologist, suffered this punishment at the hands of the victorious Allies. When the first Lord Acton's rampant bibliomania threatened to bankrupt him, his friends such as Mr Gladstone clubbed together to rescue his vast collection, later the basis of the Cambridge University Library. The historian of Rome, Theodor Mommsen, nearly died trying to rescue papers and books from his blazing Berlin home.

It is easy to forget that substantial personal libraries are a luxury which only modern technology and capitalism made possible in the first place. When the great

medieval world — Alexandria, Rome, Constantinople — were destroyed, the catastrophe might take centuries to make good. Printing made it possible for Renaissance students to own individual copies of their texts, or for humanists to amass hundreds of works. Montaigne's zest for the fine library in his round tower is palpable: he conducts a dialogue with his books, seeing them as learned company. Alongside scholars were bibliophiles, hoarders of books as objects, such as Pepys. Private libraries proliferated as the relative price of books fell over the next few centuries; Victorian Britain was a paradise for the collector.

In our century, the provenance and associations of books have assumed overriding importance. Sir Frank Kermode has been at the heart of English letters for more than a generation and many of his lost volumes had authorial dedications. Some will have been works that are now established classics. Quite apart from their monetary value, "association copies" are exciting: marginalia may be revealing; the connection between donor and recipient may be significant; the dedication itself is a document in its own right. Their destruction is almost as painful for the beholder as for the owner. Sir Frank has just one consolation. As an amputated limb still aches, so do the lost volumes survive in his remarkable erudition. The next edition of his autobiography will surely acquire a witty

title.

Euro-sceptics and UK sovereignty

From Mr Michael Stephen, MP for Shoreham (Conservative)

Sir, The Director of the European Movement — UK has missed the point (letter, September 25). Very few people, even "Euro-sceptics", think that no sovereignty should ever be surrendered. Every time Britain enters into an international treaty we surrender some of our sovereignty by giving up our legal right to act in any manner inconsistent with the treaty.

Similarly, most people recognise that in this interdependent world sovereign rights are limited by practical as well as legal restraints. No nation has, for example, the absolute freedom to manage its economy as if the international money markets did not exist.

There comes a point, however, where the process of surrendering rights and freedoms begins to invade the very core of sovereignty, and we have perhaps reached that stage in our relationship with the European institutions. Already the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights can and do overrule our courts and even our Parliament, and by a process of creative interpretation bind us to obligations which have never been agreed.

If we are to go further toward European integration the British people will need to be satisfied that the benefits would be real and enduring, and would be so great as to justify the abandonment of our national sovereignty. They will not be easily persuaded.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL STEPHEN,
House of Commons.
September 26.

From Professor Emeritus
P. T. Landsberg

Sir, The Times has recently given much prominence to harsh criticism of the Chancellor, yet from the Business section today we learn that "Britain is likely to have the most successful economy in Europe for the fourth year running in 1997".

Good for the Chancellor! His activities must have something to do with this success, and it is something to feel good about. Why was the news not displayed prominently on your front page?

Yours faithfully,
PETER T. LANDSBERG,
118 Highfield Lane,
Southampton, Hampshire.
September 26.

From Mr Richard Rawsthorn

Sir, Some years ago I heard a Conservative MEP respond to Euro-sceptical party workers by saying: "You have as much chance of turning back the European tide as King Canute." I am delighted that we are proving him wrong.

In contrast to those days when the Conservative Party firmly and effectively forbade any suggestion that Britain's position might be other than at the heart of Europe, nowadays this is a matter of vigorous public debate with the Euro-sceptics in the overwhelming majority at grassroots level.

This is living proof that nothing is history until it has happened. Instead of covering before some imaginary tide Britain must shape its own future.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD RAWSTHORN,
Barcroft,
Cliviger, near Burnley, Lancashire.
September 25.

From Mr Paul J. Barker

Sir, During his disastrous conduct of the Crimean War, the indecisive Lord Raglan took refuge in asking, in any given situation: "What would the great Duke [Wellington] have done?"

Is there not something equally pathetic in the spectacle of those on both sides of the EMU controversy praying Churchill's memory in aid of their positions (letters, September 20, 25), instead of arguing the case on its merits?

Yours faithfully,
P. J. BARKER,
1 Priory Mews, Cape Road, Warwick.
September 25.

From Mrs Patricia Perry

Sir, I write in support of your leader on September 24, "Clarke can go". Why does the Government persist in a policy which appears to be moving inexorably towards monetary union when those of us who listen to the grass roots (a Conservative canvasser for some 40 years, I am also secretary of my branch here in West Oxfordshire) know that most people oppose it?

The Tories would have the nation behind them if they changed their policy on Europe and they would then, I believe, go on to win the next election easily. Changes in the Cabinet, such as the resignation of Mr Clarke, would be immensely reassuring.

I want to see a Tory government returned to power, and free trade in Europe, but at present it seems that I have no choice but to work for and support Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party.

How else can people like me persuade government to respect our wishes?

Yours truly,
PATRICIA PERRY,
Long Meadow, Church Street,
Charlbury, Oxfordshire.
September 25.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Importance of celibacy in the Roman Catholic ministry

From Mr Thomas Wolsoncroft

of the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew xix, 12).

The relevance of celibacy, in this respect, could not be more apparent in a society which has turned sex into a narcotic for its own emprise. The Church is not relevant to such a society by agreeing with it, but by contradicting it.

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY G. WILD,
Our Lady's Presbytery,
2a Enfield Road,
Ellesmere Port, South Wirral.
September 24.

From Mrs Theresa Devereux

Sir, As the fury rages on against "runaway Bishop" Robert Wright, I look into his exhausted and pained face and can't help but feel a twinge of sympathy for the man. It's something to do with all this finger-wagging and condemnation.

If it were not for celibacy I could be now a happily married man exercising the pastoral ministry.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS WOLSONCROFT,
9 Brompton Hill, Chatham, Kent.
September 24.

From Father Anthony Wild

Sir, Argument for change is often a reactive character. It focuses on scandals caused by clerical lapses on the one hand and on the shortage of priests on the other. Clerical celibacy is blamed for both.

It is naive to imagine that a change in the Church law will solve either of these problems, and recognition of the incalculable loss to the Church of a celibate priesthood seems at times to be better appreciated by sympathetic outsiders than by certain Catholic clerics.

It is naive to imagine that a change in the Church law will solve either of these problems, and recognition of the incalculable loss to the Church of a celibate priesthood seems at times to be better appreciated by sympathetic outsiders than by certain Catholic clerics.

The tradition of celibacy in the Church is not so much to do with a law that can change as with the example and word of Jesus Christ. If a priest's life is to point from this world to the next, then with good reason the Church enjoins on priests the example of Christ's own life with the requirement to live in a manner "for the sake

of the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew xix, 12).

The relevance of celibacy, in this respect, could not be more apparent in a society which has turned sex into a narcotic for its own emprise. The Church is not relevant to such a society by agreeing with it, but by contradicting it.

But who knows how much this kind of behaviour is the result of emotional inadequacies that have been allowed to fester in what can be an unrealistic and sometimes repressively anti-quated system? And what about the grass and sensational reporting and the people who gain pleasure from reading about his predicament?

There's something in the Bible about casting the first stone.

Yours faithfully,
THERESA DEVEREUX,
4d Eastview House,
Outer Trinity,
Beverley, East Yorkshire.

From Miss A. F. Quirk

Sir, Dr Pond's letter about the duties of a Primitive Methodist minister's wife (September 24) serves to confirm the point that the Catholic priest is different from the Protestant clergyman. Dr Pond refers to "two ministries — equally valuable". The priest is not a minister in the sense of supplying a service. He is the mediator between God and man. His prime function is the administering of the Sacraments.

Running a toddler's group may be a ministry in non-Catholic church circles where the minister is simply a layman with a presidential role (and there are no good reasons for not having women ministers). For a Catholic it may be a good thing, but not in any theological sense a ministry.

Before we abandon celibacy because it is different and others do not insist on it we need to remember that for a Catholic the priest is the representative of Christ in a unique way.

Yours faithfully,
ANNE F. QUIRK,
16 Bolesworth Close,
Manchester 21.
September 24.

Welsh chapels

From Dr Roger Wools

Sir, Richard Baxter is wrong to suggest (letter, September 24; see also letters, September 20) that the people of Wales do not care about the demolition of their historic chapels. Last week, as chairman of a working party into redundant historic chapels in Wales, I presented my published report to Cadw (Welsh Historic Monuments), the government agency which commissioned it. It had become quite clear from sessions with a wide range of religious and heritage interests in Wales, and from correspondence, that there is great public concern.

While noting this, our working party did ask religious and environmental bodies why nothing is being done. The answer seemed to be that, unlike England, Wales has no governmental framework to help chapels and churches assess and make provision for their redundant religious buildings. The religious organisations have been, and are still, asking for help and advice.

The Churches Conservation Trust in England has a budget of about £4 million a year, 70 per cent of which comes from government sources. Chapels in use in Wales have received £350,000 in total from government over the past four years. As yet there is no Historic Chapels Trust in Wales. Cadw has stated that it wishes to support new initiatives to save redundant chapels, and this is encouraging. With the strong public interest that has been expressed, I am convinced that the historic chapels of Wales could be saved for future generations.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER WOOLS,
74 Bootham, York.
September 25.

Quarantine law

From Mrs Angela Barkham

Sir, After reading the distressing account of the Danish diplomat's dog dying whilst in quarantine (report, September 25), it would be interesting to know how many animals over, say, the past ten years have developed rabies whilst in quarantine.

Yours faithfully,
ANGELA BARKHAM,
Oast Cottage, Odham, Hampshire.
September 25.

Dicky birds

From Mrs Aline Templeton

Sir, You report today that an airline is to fly to North Africa a housemartin which is unfit to fly there by itself.

Is this going to prove the thin end of the wedge with housemartins with sick notes in every overhead locker?

Yours faithfully,
ALINE TEMPLETON,
The Warden's House,
Glenalmond College,
Glenalmond, Perthshire.
September 25.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.



COURT CIRCULAR

BALMORAL CASTLE
September 26: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh were represented by Captain David Younger (Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Tweeddale) at the Memorial Service for Major-General James Scott Elliot, formerly Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Dumfriesshire, which was held in St Thomas a Becket Church, Warblington, Hampshire, this afternoon.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
September 26: The Princess Royal, President, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, this morning attended a meeting of the Advisory Group at 16 Byward Street, Tower Hill, London EC3.

Her Royal Highness, Patron, National Association of Victim Support Schemes, this afternoon opened the Prisoners' Art Exhibition for the Koestler Trust at Whitley's Exhibition and Shopping Centre, Baywater, London NW1.

The Princess Royal, Patron, the National Autistic Society, later visited a supported employment scheme at the Boots Company plc, Nightingale House, 65 Curzon Street, London W1.

Her Royal Highness, President, Save the Children Fund, this evening attended a Private Appeal Committee Meeting and Dinner at Buckingham Palace.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
September 26: The Prince of Wales today visited Caithness and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Caithness (Major Graham Dunnett).

His Royal Highness this morning visited the Braehead Centre and met day care patients and staff.

The Prince of Wales, President of

The Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust, then met young people whose businesses have received support from the Trust, and saw examples of their work.

His Royal Highness this afternoon visited the Wick Heritage Centre.

The Prince of Wales afterwards visited Thurso College and was entertained to luncheon by the Provost and Councillors of Caithness. His Royal Highness subsequently met students on the College's Gamekeeping course.

The Prince of Wales later toured A & D Sutherland Limited's Quarry at Spittal and saw Caithness stone being extracted and dressed.

Finally, His Royal Highness visited Upper Dounreay Beef Farm.

KENSINGTON PALACE

September 26: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, Honorary Air Commodore, today visited Royal Air Force Coningsby.

Her Royal Highness was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Lincolnshire (Mrs Bridget Cracroft-Eley).

September 26: The Duke of Gloucester, Patron of the Peterborough Cathedral Development and Preservation Trust, today was present at the launch of the Trust at Midgate House, Midgate, Peterborough, and was received on arrival by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire (Mr James Crowden).

THATCHET HOUSE LODGE

September 26: Princess Alexandra, Deputy Colonel-in-Chief, today visited The Queen's Royal Lancers at Osnabrück, Germany.

The Lady Mary Mumford and Captain Neil Blair, R.N. were in attendance.

Memorial services

Miss Jane Baxter

A service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Miss Jane Baxter, film and stage actress, was held yesterday at St Mary's, Wimbledon. The Rev Simon Thorburn officiated.

Mr James Montgomery, son, read the lesson. The Hon Katherine Dugdale, grand-daughter, read Minnie Louise Haskins' *The Game of the Year*. The Hon Charlotte Dugdale, grand-daughter, read from Joyce Grenfell's *I should go before the rest of you*. The Hon Thomas Dugdale, grandson, read from the works of George Bernard Shaw. Mr Donald Sinden read Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*, and Samuel Monksaratt, grandson, read William Penn's *The Fruits of Solitude*.

Mr Bryan Forbes and Mrs Dudley Buchanan gave addresses. During the service the choir of Norman Court School with Tara Montgomery, granddaughter, sang *I Will be With You* (Gerard Markland), and *All Things Bright and Beautiful* (John Rutter). The L'Invit Singers sang *Introit* (Bernard Rose), *Psalm 130*, *If Ye Love Me* (Thomas Tallis), the Chorus from *Matthew's Passion* (J.S. Bach), *Be Thou Our Vision* (Samuel Coleridge-Taylor), and *Cold Be in My Heart* (Walford Davies). Among others present were:

Mr and Mrs Monksaratt and Lord and Lady Crathorne (sons-in-law) and daughter, Mrs James Montgomery, granddaughter, Mr Tom and Marc Monksaratt (grandsons), Mrs Ivor Forte (sister), Mr and Mrs John Pevsner, Mr Perven Shah, Mrs Charlotte Heber-Perry, Mr Pervis Shah, Mrs Yvonne Forte.

The Hon David and Mrs Dugdale, the Mayor of Merton, Sir John and Lady Anson, Mrs Diana Sinden, Miss Joanne Haskins, Miss Delap, Miss Genoveva Garcia, Mr Joseph Weston, Mr Bill Coulson, Miss Elizabeth Weston, Mr Douglas Cotton, Mr Michael Thornton, Mr Norman Williams and Miss Patricia Dainton, Mr Philip Dainton, Mr and Mrs (Wimbledon Guild), Mr Robin Cooper (Wimbledon Theatre) and many others.

Finally, the service ended with a hymn.

His Honour Bernard Gillis, QC

A service of memorial and thanksgiving for the life of His Honour Bernard Gillis, QC, was held on Wednesday in Lincoln's Inn Chapel. Canon William Norman officiated and Mr Michael Gillis, son, read *The Kaddish*.

The Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn read the lesson and Master McKenzie, QC, gave an address.

The Treasurer of Inner Temple, and Mrs Sherrard and the Under-Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn attended. Among others present were:

Mrs Gillis (widow), Mr and Mrs John Island, Mr and Mrs Darren Gillis (son), Mr and Mrs Norman Shaw, Mrs Janet Glass, Mr and Mrs Philip Legg, Lord Justice Miller, Sir John and Lady Balcombe, the Hon Greville Jauncey, QC, Mr Sir Irvine Goulding, Sir Peter Hall, Mr Michael Hough, Mr Justice Dyson, Sir Maurice and Lady Laming.

Mr Rodwell, QC, Judge Coombe, Judge Boal, QC, Judge Peartree, QC, Mr Christopher QC, Mr Roy Amiot, QC, Mr Stephen Kramer, QC, Mr John Sauvage, QC, Mr Michael Lipton, QC, Mr Michael Simpson, QC, Mr James Sunnucks, Mr Michael Glass, the Common Serjeant, Mr and Mrs Ellis Birks, Mr Donald Silcock, Mr and Mrs Ian, Mr Charles Salmon, Mr R & G Shillingford, Mr Alasdair Macleod, Mr and Mrs John and Mrs Joanne Moore, Mrs Edward Grayson, Mr Anthony Rea, Mr T G Dore, Mr David Horne, Mr Derek Butler, Mr and Mrs Doreen, Mr and Mrs Sidney Manches, Miss B Kyne, Mr and Mrs J M John, Mr John and Mrs Tony Yablon, Mr John Nuning, QC, Member of the Royal Society of England and Wales and Dr Lionel Kopelowitz (representing the Board of Deputies of British Jews).

BIRTHDAYS today

Miss Diane Abbott MP, 43; Dame Josephine Barstow, opera singer, 56; Sir Roger Birch, former Chief Executive, Selsdon, 66; Baroness Blackstone, 54; the Earl of Glamis, 77; Mr Michael Colvin, MP, 64; Miss Barbara Dickson, singer, 48; Mr Ronald Fox, senior partner, Fox Williams, 50; Vice-Admiral I D G Garnett, 52; Mr J. Gill, former president, Saatchi and Saatchi, 76; Sir Alexander Graham, former Lord Mayor of London, 58; Mr Nicholas Haslam, interior designer, 57; Sir Peter Holmes, former chairman, Sheld Transport and Trading Company, 64; Mr Gordon Honeycombe, broadcaster and author, 60; Mr Michael Houlahan, director, Home Office Museum, 48; Mr Lawson, 50; Michael Lindsay, former Headmaster, Malmesbury School, 86; Professor G.H. Martin, former Master of Peterhouse, 86; Professor G.H. Martin, former Chief Executive of Public Records, 68; the Rev Professor D.E. Nishman, theologian, 75; Mr D.A.E.R. Peake, former chairman, Kleinwort Benson Group, 62; General Sir Ian Ricard, 88; Dr Margaret Rule, consultant to the Mary Rose Trust, 68; Lord Shepherd, 76; Sir Gerald Warner, deputy secretary, Cabinet Office, 65.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS
The Oxford and County Business (Secretarial) College will be holding a Diamond Jubilee Reunion in Oxford, on Saturday, October 19, 1996. We should be delighted to hear from ex-students and teachers who would like to attend and/or who would like to join our alumni network. Please contact Rosemary Waterhouse on 01865 310100.

DEATHS
William of Wykeham, Chancellor, Bishop of Winchester, Bishop's Waltham, Hants, 1404; Edgar Degas, painter, Paris, 1917;

Adelina Patti, Baronesse Cedstrom, soprano, Craig-y-Nos castle, near Swansea, Glamorgan, 1910; Engelbert Humperdinck, composer, Neustadt, Germany, 1921; Clara Bow, the 'it' girl star, Los Angeles, 1965; Dame Grade Fields, singer, 1979; The Society of Jesus was founded, 1540.

The Stockton-Darlington railway opened, 1825.

Service luncheon

The Royal Garvagh Rifles Major Sir Michael Parsons presided at the annual reunion luncheon of The Royal Garvagh Rifles Officers' Association held yesterday at the Duke of York's Headquarters, Chelsea.

DEATHS

Stephens - Kenneth Eddie, 70, of 23a, St. John's Road, Chelmsford, Essex, died on September 12, 1996.

WHITEHORN - On September 24th, at The Portland Hospital, to Sian and Matthew, a son, Theodore William Thomas.

WHITEHORN - On September 25th at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to Margaret and Robert, a daughter, Julia.

DAVIES - On September 26th, to Antoinette (née Christopher) and Mark, a son.

MARTLEY - On September 19th, 1996, in Chelmsford, Essex, Stuart James Dallimore, brother for Duncan and grandsons for Derek, Fawcett and Robert, and Judy Alexander.

WEED - On September 26th, to Nicholas and Philippa, a son, Oliver Samuel James, a brother for Camilla and Alexander.

WHITEHORN - On 25th September 1996, to Winifred and David, a daughter, Zed Adrienne Rose, a sister for Imogen.

WYRSHON - On September 26th, at The Portland Hospital, to Sian (née Lawrie) and Brian, a beautiful daughter, Georgie, a brother for Camilla and Robert.

PLAINE - On September 11th to Caroline (née Macmillan) and George, a son, William and a daughter, Emily Alice Whitchurch.

TOWN - On 15th September, to David, a son, and his wife, Debbie Catherine Louise.



This chalk study of Gainsborough's daughters is now on show at his birthplace

A Gainsborough comes home

BY JOHN SHAW

A STRIKING chalk drawing by Thomas Gainsborough of his two daughters as young girls has been bought by Gainsborough's House, the artist's birthplace in Sudbury, Suffolk, with money from the Heritage Lottery Fund and has just gone on show there.

The double portrait (10 3/4 in by 8 1/2 in), done in black and white chalk on blue paper, is one of the few surviving studies for one of the artist's oils and dates from about 1763.

It is one of his most important preparatory studies and has been repeatedly exhibited round the world. Earlier this century it was in a private collection in America and the finished work is currently hanging at the Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts.

The drawing has been on loan to Gainsborough's House for the past eight years. It

belonged to a collector in London who gave the museum a chance to buy in a private treaty sale through Suffolk County Council. The transaction provided tax incentives for the vendor and made the study much more affordable for the museum.

The drawing was originally valued at more than £150,000, but the deal brought the purchase price down to £96,198. The Heritage Fund contributed a generous £86,500 or 90 per cent, a grant which was among the first to a local museum to buy a work of art. The acquisition secures its future.

Hugh Belsey, curator of Gainsborough's House, said: "This is the second fabulous Gainsborough drawing the museum has purchased this year. It makes the drawing collection in this small market town among the best in the world. Many people have helped us reach this magnificent result and I should like to thank them all most warmly."

School announcements

Bethany School, Goudhurst, Kent

Term began earlier this month with 256 pupils on roll including 152 boarders and 49 girls. The overall number of pupils is the highest on record. The GCSE 'high grade' pass rate which was 42 per cent in 1993 reached a record 80 per cent this summer. There are 84 pupils in the Sixth Form.

Former pupils and friends are invited to attend the Thanksgiving Service for the life of Mr Kenneth Pellingy who was Headmaster from 1948 to 1970. The Service will be in the School Chapel at noon on Saturday, October 12. Please telephone the School (01865 211273) if further details are required.

St Leonards and St Katharine Schools

The autumn term began on September 4. Erica Bennett continues as Head Girl and Emma Thomson as School Captain. Scholarships examinations, including Sixth Form Scholar-

ships, take place on Saturday, November 9. The closing date for applications is October 12. Details and application forms available from the Registrar. As part of the General Studies programme of public lectures this term we have already welcomed Donna Rae, Head of Art & Design, who spoke on Giacometti. Forthcoming lecturers include Joy Bashara, Fulbright Exchange Teacher; Sir Bruce Pamilo, Governor of the Bank of Scotland; David Fanshawe, Composer and Explorer; and Professor Michael Rugg, School of Psychology, University of St Andrews. The Oxford reading weekend was held at Lungs from September 13 to 15. European Day will take place on November 13. Richard Holloway, Bishop of Edinburgh, will preach at the School Service and will lead the U6 Discussion Day on Sunday, November 24. The poet, Jessica D'este will judge entries during Poetry Week and Harriet Glen, Director of the

Dundee Repertory Theatre will adjudicate the Inter-House Drama. Kade Skurupka represented Great Britain in an U20 International against Italy, France and Spain, held on August 3, in Nembro, Italy and won a bronze medal in the 3000 metres. An Open Day for parents of prospective pupils will be held on Friday, October 4. Term ends on Wednesday, December 11, after the School Carol Service in Holy Trinity Church, St Andrews.

Wellesley House and St Peter's Court

By permission of the Master and Wardens of the Company of Armourers and Brasiers there will be a dinner for Old Boys who left the schools before 1978 at Armourers' Hall, Coleman Street, London EC2, on Wednesday, October 16, 1996, at 7.30 pm. All are welcome but please book.

For more information, contact the School Office on 01865 213264.

MATTHEWS - Patrick Lloyd, on Tuesday, September 24th, aged 82.

Peacefully after a short illness.

Much loved husband of

Mollie and devoted father of

David and Peter.

Services: 10.30 am, St. John's

Church, St. John's Street, Westgate, Canterbury, Kent.

Interment: 1.30 pm, St. John's

Church, St. John's Street, Westgate, Canterbury, Kent.

Memorial service: 7.30 pm, St. John's

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OBITUARIES

NICU CEAUSESCU

Nicu Ceausescu, youngest son of the late Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, died in a Vienna hospital from cirrhosis of the liver yesterday aged 45. He was born on September 1, 1951.

In the terrible annals of Nicolae Ceausescu's 24-year tyranny over the Romanian people, the activities of his youngest son Nicu managed to preserve their own grisly niche. On a people who had already been reduced to grinding poverty and terror of what each day might bring, he did his best to inflict additional torment and indignity. There is something which recalls the acts of the most degenerate and sadistic of the later Roman emperors in the details of the ménage he maintained in the region of central Transylvania of which he was absolute master.

It is only perhaps because of his country's desire to put behind it some of the most shaming deeds to have been enacted on European soil since the Second World War that he was not condemned to death as his father was. Charged and convicted of genocide after the murder of 89 people in the Transylvanian town of Sibiu, which had risen against his oppression in 1989, he was originally given a 20-year sentence. But this was subsequently reduced on appeal to the lesser charge of instigation of genocide.

Finally, as if the Romanian judicial system could not bear to look into the heart of the unspeakable criminality which its inquiries had exposed, he got away with a five-year sentence for illegal possession of firearms. He was released for good behaviour after only three years.

Styled — with loathing — the Prince of Sibiu by the inhabitants of the town in the southern Carpathians which was his fief, he and his aides indulged themselves in a ferocious appetite for excess: drink, drugs and women — the last generally being subjected to the sadistic practices common to men of jaded palate. The Olympic gymnast Nadia Comaneci was among those inducted into this unsavoury circle, and it was alleged that he had raped and tortured her by pulling out her finger nails.

In the hermetically-sealed hell he created around him, Ceausescu was completely cut off from any sense of reality. He remained convinced to the end that the overthrow of his father and mother (and their subsequent execution) had

nothing to do with the wrath of an oppressed populace but was the work of the KGB. His hatred of the reforming Soviet President Gorbachev was pathological. His glee at his downfall was a mixture of peevishness and malevolence.

When confronted with the results of his father's regime expressed in terms of human misery, families uprooted, communities destroyed, orphanages filled with children broken in body and spirit, he was able to the end of his life to deny the facts, although it was scarcely possible to travel either the streets of Bucharest or the Romanian countryside without seeing evidence of the West.

Nicu Ceausescu was the youngest of the three children of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu. From his early childhood his father occupied senior posts in the Romanian Communist regime, and his children were brought up in the affluence that went with that status. Nicu Ceausescu was still only 14 when his father became Secretary-General of the Romanian Communist Party — effectively his country's dictator. By that stage his sons were hardened in habits of self-indulgence.

By all accounts Nicu was a pampered child, and alternate bouts of mollycoddling and parental violence doubtless contributed to what was to become an increasingly unstable character. He was noted for his spiteful acts towards domestics in the palatial family home, where he rode around the corridors on his bicycle, knocking over maids and rejoicing in the crash of crockery and glass as their trays of drink and food, destined for the family apartments, fell to the floor.

After school, Ceausescu did his national service with the Romanian air force, rising swiftly to the rank of major and taking his pilot's licence. He travelled widely: in the Middle East where, in particular, he became familiar with Jordan, and in China. After finishing his national service he went to university and took a degree in political science. He was later to say he had done this to please his father. Politics, other than that it allowed him to enjoy the naked abuse of power, never interested him, although he became head of the Communist Party's youth wing and subsequently Youth Minister.

As governor of Sibiu county, where he was posted in 1980, his only "political" acts were ones of pure banditry, hijacking convoys of food destined for other areas, but these acts gave him a certain rough and

ready image and a degree of popularity with those sections of the populace which were enabled to enjoy the food without having to suffer the fearsome attentions of Ceausescu and his henchmen.

While Romania enjoyed an increasing freedom from Soviet domination, and hence an uncritical popularity in the West — on a state visit to Britain in 1978 his father was created an honorary Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath — these abuses went unremarked. Under Ceausescu senior, Romania further sweetened its image in the outside world by repaying its debts to the developed countries of the West.

It was only as the 1980s went by that the horrific price which was being exacted from the Romanian people became apparent. In Bucharest itself, the extent of the social engineering which involved the bulldozing of many of the city's historic districts and their replacement with soulless housing blocks and streets, could hardly be ignored by even the most myopic visitor.

When the end came for the Ceausescu regime it did so with an almost miraculous suddenness. From the city of Timisoara the flames of revolution spread like wildfire. In marked contrast to the "velvet" style revolutions which ended Communist regimes in many other eastern European countries, there was fierce and bloody fighting. Thousands died when government tanks opened fire on crowds in city streets.

None of this could save Nicolae Ceausescu who was arrested with his wife. On Christmas Day 1989 the couple were shot by a firing squad after the briefest of hearings.

After their father's downfall an inquiry was launched into the alleged criminal activities of his three children, who all spent varying times in jail. But after Nicu's release he and other convicted Communists were granted a pardon. In recent years he liked to claim that he had urged reform on his father at the height of his power.

After that, all three and their families kept their heads down. Nicu continued to drink with ever-increasing intensity and his liver eventually succumbed to the punishment he had inflicted on it. Apparently he had been transferred to Vienna to await a liver transplant. But before this could be done a massive hepatic haemorrhage ended his life.

There were no children of an early marriage, which was dissolved.



Nicu Ceausescu under guard in the dock during one of his court appearances in 1990

GERALD DARLING

Gerald Darling, QC, former leader of the Admiralty Bar, died on September 13 aged 75. He was born on December 8, 1921.

AMONG the many cases in which Gerald ("Bunny") Darling participated as leader of the Admiralty Bar was the formal investigation in 1983 of the disaster involving the loss of the Penlee lifeboat and her crew in December 1981. In this hearing he appeared for the Department of Trade. A case of very a different kind was the salvage award he made in 1986 for the rescue by a Spanish ship of a Harrier jump jet which had landed unexpectedly on her foredeck.

More recently he conducted the formal investigation in 1988 into the mysterious loss in a typhoon in the South China Sea of the British bulk carrier *Derbyshire* and her crew. The vessel had sunk in more than two miles of water and Darling and his assessors decided on the evidence before them that the precise cause of the loss could not be established. Remarkable developments in diving technology since 1988 may enable more to be discovered about the recently located wreck than was known to the court.

Gerald Ralph Auchinleck Darling was the elder son of Lieutenant-Colonel R. R. A. Darling and his wife Moira (née Moriarty). When his father died in 1958 he inherited Crevenagh House, Omagh, and was proud of his descent from the Auchinleck family. He was most at home in the countryside of Co Tyrone for which he had a lifelong passion.

He gained a scholarship to Harrow and then a Classics scholarship to Hertford College, Oxford, but volunteered for wartime service with the Royal Navy before leaving school. On reaching his 18th birthday at the end of his first term at Oxford, he was called up and in 1941 went into the Fleet Air Arm as a fighter pilot.

Very few of his contemporaries who trained with him survived the war, but thanks (he believed) to the lucky black shamrock painted on the side of his aircraft, he survived several close shaves. When training, he crashed and suffered severe injuries and was told by his doctor that he would never walk again. In defiance of this verdict he was to resume not only walking but also his flying career.

However, his injuries were to cause him great pain in later life. Later he was forced to crash-land in the Mediterranean and spent almost a day



in the sea before being rescued. He was a Fleet Fighter Pilot with 807 Seafire Squadron in the aircraft carriers *Furious*, *Indomitable*, *Battle* and *Hunter*. Later he became Test Pilot of the Eastern Fleet and Chief Test Pilot in HMS *Unicorn* — a high-risk appointment as the aircraft were hastily assembled on board ship before being tested. He retired in 1968 as a lieutenant-commander.

After the war he had returned to Oxford to read law and was called to the Bar by the Middle Temple in 1950. He became a pupil of Bushby Hewson (who was later to become, with his seagoing experience, a great Admiralty Judge). Darling joined the same chambers, then headed by Kenneth Carpenter, QC and remained there throughout his professional life. He soon developed an outstanding Admiralty practice.

Those who were in court or who worked with him soon recognised his powers of advocacy, his courteous but penetrating cross-examinations, his eloquence and his felicitous command of the English language (which he always attributed to his classical education). He was appointed to the Panel of Wreck Commissioners in 1967, took silk in 1968 and the same year became a Lloyd's Salvage Arbitrator (becoming Appeal Arbitrator in 1978, a position

he held until he retired in 1991).

In 1978 he was elected leader of the Admiralty Bar on the elevation of Barry Sheen to the High Court Bench. He was elected a bencher of the Middle Temple in 1972 and became Treasurer of the Inn in 1991. In 1979 on the invitation of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, he was appointed to the ancient office of Admiralty Judge of the Cinque Ports. In 1991 he was awarded the Lloyd's Silver Medal for his work in the Lloyd's salvage arbitration system and, in particular, for his innovations aimed at encouraging the protection of the marine environment.

Darling was called to the Northern Irish Bar in 1957 and in 1992 was made an Honorary Bencher of that Bar. In 1970 he became chairman of the London Ulster Lawyers Union. In 1991, as Treasurer of the Middle Temple, he was to call to the Bench Mrs Mary Robinson, President of the Republic of Ireland.

After his retirement he was much involved in his local Northern Irish community, becoming Deputy Lieutenant in 1990 and High Sheriff of County Tyrone in 1993.

He married in 1955 Susan Ann Hobbs of Perth, Western Australia, the daughter of an army officer. He is survived by her and a son and daughter.

PROFESSOR MARUYAMA MASAO

Professor Maruyama Masao, Japanese social scientist, died on August 15 aged 82. He was born on March 22, 1914.

ONE OF the leading Japanese thinkers of his generation, Maruyama Masao was an

authoritative and creative intellectual historian and a political philosopher of international stature.

Maruyama grew up during the ultra-nationalist period of Japan's modern history, and his life's work may be interpreted as a sustained and

modernisation and which alone could form the basis of responsible politics.

This concern with modernisation and with individual moral consciousness and freedom can be found in all of Maruyama's writing, even when it is concerned

with Japan's remote past.

Maruyama Masao was the son of the liberal journalist and political commentator Maruyama Kanji (1880-1955), from whom he inherited a distrust of sweeping theories and a belief in the importance of the individual in history. Apart from a brief interlude of conscription towards the end of the war — he was a private in the suburbs of Hiroshima when the bomb was dropped — Maruyama's working life was spent entirely at the University of Tokyo.

He graduated from the prestigious Faculty of Law in 1937, becoming assistant professor in 1940 and full professor in 1950. He retired in 1971 but, despite poor health, he continued his work to the end. At the time of his death he was overseeing the publication of a 15-volume edition of his writings.

Maruyama first came to public attention with a brilliant and revolutionary series of essays on the intellectual history of the Tokugawa period (1603-1868). Initially published during the war, these were collected as *Studies in the Intellectual History of*

the background and development of Japanese fascism from a variety of perspectives, and subjected wartime Japanese society and its leaders to a scrutiny no less searching than his earlier work.

Maruyama, though not a Marxist, like most 20th-century Japanese intellectuals was deeply influenced by Marxism. In his later years, however, he turned to the exploration of how particularly Japanese modes of thought had expressed themselves in his nation's political culture. In the early 20th-century Japanese chronicles, for instance, he found a mode of thought that viewed history as a spontaneous and, in effect, self-legitimating process; the status quo at any time was felt to be the product of inevitable forces. Individuals counted for rather little, and it was futile to apply universal values, such as were historically available to the Japanese from Buddhism and Confucianism, in evaluating their conduct. This attitude, Maruyama argued, constituted the *basso ostinato* of Japanese history. Its relevance to the 20th century was obvious. In analysing history as a spontaneous and, in effect, self-legitimating process; the status quo at any time was felt to be the product of inevitable forces. Individuals counted for rather little, and it was futile to apply universal values, such as were historically available to the Japanese from Buddhism and Confucianism, in evaluating their conduct. This attitude, Maruyama argued, constituted the *basso ostinato* of Japanese history. Its relevance to the 20th century was obvious.

Maruyama was well known among Western scholars concerned with Japan, who greatly respected both his intellectual brilliance and the liberal assumptions of his writings. He spent periods as a visiting scholar or professor at Harvard and Princeton (both of which awarded him honorary doctorates), and at St Anthony's College, Oxford, and the University of California at Berkeley.

He is survived by his wife, Yukari, and by a son.

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Read drawing, bend tube

The specialist firm of Iracrost runs its own programme of on-the-job training

NEXT year, Iracrost, a small, family-owned firm which supplies tube assemblies mainly for hydraulic applications such as excavators, will be celebrating its 25th anniversary. It was set up in 1972 by Tim Bamford, who started supplying tubes to a number of customers, including his brother, J.C. Bamford, the man behind JCB earth-moving equipment. After Tim Bamford's death, his wife and daughter now own the firm.

With several well-known vehicle manufacturers among its customers, it is perhaps surprising it was not set up in the UK's industrial heartland. Instead, it is in Blandford Forum, on the River Stour, not far from Bournemouth.

David Morley, the company's

THE FIRM

managing director, joined the firm where his father was general manager shortly after it had been set up. He served a three-year apprenticeship as a welder and eventually became joint managing director with his father before the latter retired this year.

In the past few years, the company has done well despite the recession. "It was a tough time," admits Mr Morley. "We had to streamline the company and concentrate on our strengths. We were fortunate in having the customers we do have, because they have helped us through it."

More recently, Iracrost has won new customers such as Hitachi and Massey Ferguson. Last year the factory was extended and the workforce has increased from about 80 to the present figure of 130. The majority of these are semi-skilled or unskilled people, with a smaller core of skilled workers.

With its specialist needs, the company has a programme of on-the-job training. "You can't go to college to learn how to bend tubes," says Mr Morley. "On the other hand, basic engineering skills are a good base on which to build — the ability to read drawings, for example. There are a lot of youngsters around who don't know the difference between a third angle and first angle projection."



David Morley: increasing the workforce



From left: Simon Gingell, Eleanor Court, Jamie Battista and Haylie Middlemas, all 13, from Lutterworth School, Leicester, were on a Rolls-Royce sponsored Eurostar carriage yesterday

THE EXPERIENCE

MORE than 600 youngsters and their teachers helped the Engineering Employers' Federation to celebrate its 100th birthday by taking a day trip to France yesterday.

The idea was to bring to their attention two of the high points of British technology — the Eurostar

train and the Channel Tunnel — as well as to show that engineering can be glitz and international.

To that end, members of the cast of *Starlight Express* were on hand

(or rollerskate) at Waterloo as the children set off for lunch in Lille.

They had gathered from schools all around the country; about 75 children were flown in by the Armed Forces. The event was a curtain-raiser for 1997's Year of Engineering Success (YES).

Catch them quickly in the classroom

Ercall Wood School prides itself on its close links with local firms and industry

THE SCHOOL

each department in the school. Each company then presents a challenge which will be tackled by about a dozen pupils working with a teacher and someone from the company.

Glynwed Foundries worked with pupils refurbishing the school's remembrance garden. As part of this scheme, the pupils designed a memorial plaque which was then produced by apprentices at Glynwed and now has a place of honour in the garden.

Leanarts, the Telford pen manufacturer, set the children the challenge of designing a fountain pen. The company put it into production and, working through the school, helped the pupils set up a shop selling it and other pens, with the profits going to the school.

In later years there are other initiatives. Company representatives come to the school to help the pupils develop personal skills including completing a job application form and then going through a mock interview. After this, pupils have two weeks of work experience in an industry of their choice, which could be anywhere from a small shop, bank or building society to a big engineering company.

The school is committed to giving the children a competitive edge when it comes to the world of work and has built strong local relationships, particularly with the engineering industry. "We recognise," says Mr Rubery, "the value of it and the need for it, not only in providing industry with the kind of people they want, but in building children's skills."

The focus on industry starts at the age of 14 with an industry week which involves setting up a link with a local company for

'We offer business the kind of people they really want'

youngsters to think engineering is dull'

supported by industry, government, trade unions, academia and engineering's professional institutions. More than 20 patrons, mostly big companies, have provided £700,000 and the Government £500,000 to cover running costs. More than £20 million is likely to be spent by a variety of organisations on the thousands of events.

Grabbing a pencil and pad, Dr Harris reduces an operation of enormous size and complexity to a rapidly drawn, three-dimensional matrix. "Along this side are the ten major themes: communications, energy, defence and so on. On this

side are the people we are aiming at: the public, young people, opinion formers, employers and engineers. Along this axis is time.

"For far too long we have allowed our youngsters to think that engineering is dull, routine and poorly paid. Talking from personal experience, at British Aerospace and British Gas, engineering is extremely exciting. It takes the most advanced scientific inventions and produces products for profit."

By getting companies to open their doors, YES will show that there is very little metal-bashing in the industry. What there is includes

nano-technology, software engineering, robotics and cyberspace.

"We have got some companies," Dr Harris says, "who are opening their doors and letting five and six year olds play with electron microscopes. Our intention is to get out into the schools, playgrounds and shopping malls."

She points out that the average pay for a chartered engineer is about £36,000 a year, which, she says, compares well with the law or medicine. In the top 100 UK companies, there are 84 chartered engineers in the boardrooms, just a little way behind accountants.

The Year of Engineering Success

is unique in its scope. It will, however, be some time before it is clear whether it has succeeded in improving the quantity and quality of engineering recruits. Changes in attitude should show up more quickly through surveys.

There have already been some events acting as curtain-raisers for YES. Yesterday, about 600 children travelled by Eurostar from London to Lille — a trip aimed at giving them an opportunity to study the impact of engineering on everyday life. It is initiatives such as this which Dr Harris hopes will begin to change the industry's image.

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For more information on EMTA
please contact Elaine Essery on

01923 238441

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So let's talk about where you could fit in. For further information, call **Freefone 0800 800870** (after 1st September) or contact your University Careers Service.



NEWS

Israel on brink of war as 50 die

■ Israel and the Palestinians were close to all-out war after Israel declared a state of emergency in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The death toll in two days of fighting had exceeded 50. Israeli tanks were sent into the area for the first time since it was captured from the Arabs in the 1967 Six Day War. Western diplomatic sources said that the Middle East was closer to a wider Arab-Israeli war than for many years Page 1, II

Gas cut-off warning before the bill

■ Thousands of people are getting final warnings from British Gas that they will be disconnected even though they have not received a bill. Red notices threatening disconnection are being sent to customers who are good payers around the country as a new billing system has thrown the company into a fresh round of chaos and controversy Page 1

Geldof action

Bob Geldof, the pop star, launched an emergency High Court action in the Family Division following a police raid on the home of his former wife, Paula Yates, in which opium was allegedly found Page 1

Birt apologises

John Birt, the Director-General of the BBC, was accused of caving in to Conservative pressure after apologising for shortcomings in an Anna Ford radio interview with Kenneth Clarke Page 2

Bandits kill Briton

A British businessman has been shot dead as he tried to repel Albanian bandits trying to board his yacht which was moored in a Corfu harbour Page 3

Girl died on slide

A girl aged three died when she became trapped by the neck on a children's slide. Safety standards are to be re-examined and a company is to be prosecuted Page 5

Child health improves

The health of children under 15 has improved faster over the past 20 years than any other age group Page 6

Cost of tax rise

Under Gordon Brown's proposals for a 50 per cent top tax rate, the television and radio presenter Chris Tarrant would pay almost £300,000 more on his newly negotiated £3 million salary Page 7

Fruit is the prescription for longer life

■ Several apples a day — or any kind of fruit — will keep the cardiac surgeon away, researchers have found. Eating fresh fruit cuts the risk of dying from a heart attack by almost a quarter and from a stroke by almost one third. Overall, those who ate fruit daily increased their life expectancy by 20 per cent compared with those who ate fruit less frequently Page 1



The Prince of Wales was in high spirits yesterday when he joined the regulars at the Laurandy Day Centre near Wick

BUSINESS

Telecoms: BT made its second largest foreign investment by agreeing to pay £1.1 billion for a 25 per cent stake in a new company formed to compete with France Telecom Page 23

Guinness: A strong first-half contribution from brewing helped the drinks group to a record half year profit Page 23

Reshuffle: Robert Fleming, the merchant bank, has reshuffled executives at its Jardine Fleming fund management arm after the Hong Kong firm was fined £700,000 by a City watchdog Page 23

Markets: The FT-SE 100 Index fell 2.5 to 3933.2. Sterling's index rose from \$6.42 to \$1.5623 but a rise from DM2.3623 to DM2.3767 Page 26

SPORT

Football: Paul Merson, the Arsenal forward who had problems with drugs, alcohol and gambling, has been recalled to the England squad for the World Cup match against Poland Page 44

Golf: Padraig Harrington made light of showers and a gusting wind to set a course record of 65 in the Smurfit European Open at the K Club near Dublin Page 39

Sailing: The 14 skippers in the BT Global Challenge have drawn up an agreement about outside assistance on routing, one of the main areas of contention in the 33,000-mile race Page 42

Boxing: Lennox Lewis is likely to meet Oliver McCall in the United States for the WBC heavyweight championship Page 39

ARTS

Beckdash: American pop star John Mellencamp has a message for Oasis: "Get lost. People aren't going to pay money to see a band that gets up and cusses them" Page 33

Songbird: Sheryl Crow confirms her great singer-songwriting potential with a fine new album; also reviewed is the latest from the Lemonheads, and a collection of Nirvana's songs Page 33

Mass of boys: One of Germany's best boys' choirs, the Tölzer Knabenchor, has collaborated with a British period-instrument ensemble on an impressive recording of Bach's Mass in B Minor Page 34

Rigg superb: A magnificently performed Diana Rigg in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* at the Almeida Theatre Page 34

FEATURES

Fashion victim: Joseph Connolly mingles with the glittering and the glamorous in a new festival of fashion in Florence Page 14

Marriage stakes: Now that John F. Kennedy jnr has walked the aisle, there is no contender for America's most eligible man Page 14

Star charm: Melifilous, circumspect and worned by the modern world, Sir Alec Guinness, 82, talks to Valerie Grove Page 15

TV LISTINGS

Preview: Rosemary Verey offers a seasonal guide: *English Country Garden* (BBC2, 8.30pm). Review: Peter Barnard writes an open letter to Peter Lilley Page 47

OPINION

Damage limitation
Mr Netanyahu has shown a pragmatic streak. His Government has switched tack before to keep the peace process afloat. He needs to do so again Page 17

Spanish mothers

As Spain grows greyer, and its mothers persevere with their 12 babies per head, it may one day look back wistfully on the days of its "motherhood prizes" Page 17

Man without his books

Every bibliophile's worst nightmare came true for Sir Frank Kermode when he lost some 2,500 books to the Cambridge refuse collection service Page 17

COLUMNS

BERNARD LEVIN
I shake my head in wonder, that a good man can come from the loins of a bad one. Mind you, Nicholas Mosley has made many a slip. For instance, speaking of his father, he says: "He was not a racist and had an idealistic vision" Page 16

PHILIP HOWARD

The emu is indeed a fabulous bird. A pathetic bird in the original sense of inspiring passion and terror, rather than the schoolboy slang "pathetic" meaning wimpish and jolly-swizz Page 16

RICHARD BRANSON

The "liberalisation" of air travel advocated by Republicans and Democrats makes not even a token attempt to open America's massive internal market to competition from carriers like Virgin Page 16

GERALD DAVIES

Although there is a danger of incurring the wrath of the guardians of rugby football's integrity, a sympathetic case can be made for the player who retaliates Page 40

OBITUARIES

Nic Ceausescu, son of the Romanian dictator; Gerald Darting, of the Admiralty Bar; Professor Maruyama Masao, Japanese social scientist Page 19

LETTERS

British sovereignty; celibacy; Pad-dy Ashdown's patriotism Page 17

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Screening process: The headmaster of Gordonstoun explains how a fly-on-the-wall television film may have benefited his pupils Page 37

THE PAPERS

Benjamin Netanyahu is a dangerous politician. We must hope that he will stop playing with fire. And that his compatriots will remember that the majority of them are in favour of peace. Otherwise the entire region will once again become a valley of tears and blood

— *Le Monde*

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